

DPN

DISEASED PARIAH NEWS #8

\$3

Inside This Issue:

*How to Tell if Your
Loved One is Dead,
Chills & Thrills for
Vegetarian Pariahs,
Unflattering Things
About a Certain
Famous Queer
Journalist — and
Much More!*



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Michael Botkin

**YOUR GRACIOUS KEEPER
OF THE CAMERA**
Mod Bob

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Diseased Pariah News is an increasingly wayward publication of, by, and for people with HIV disease (and their friends and loved ones). We are a forum for infected people to share their thoughts, feelings, art, writing, and brownie recipes in an atmosphere free of teddy bears, magic rocks, and seronegative guilt. We encourage people with HIV to submit material. Include an SASE to have your submission returned. Your payment will be the satisfaction of being (in)famous, and contributors retain all rights to their individual work.

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ISSUE

8

EIGHT

CONTENTS

Random Words: Dancing in the Streets	2
Don't Ask, Don't Tell by Emil Knightwright.....	4
Eager Beaver by Daniel Perdios.....	6
The Vision Thing by Rondo Mieczkowski.....	8
Page Nine Boy Jose Sequiera	9
Condom Corner: Carburetor Cleaners Compared!	10
DPN Resource Guide.....	16
DPN Reader Profile: Landscapes of the Imagination.....	17
Centerfold Boy: Brian Covell	20
Dead Boyfriends Society by I.M. Naughtbitter.....	23
Signs of Death by Michael Botkin.....	24
DPN Meat Market.....	25
Advice for the Loveworn: Ask Aunt Kaposi	26
The AIDS Clone vs. the New Clone by David Feinberg.....	28
GET FAT, don't die! looks at new ways to perk up old silage	30
Pornkartoffel: Mein Kock von Sierra Pacific.....	36
Politics as Usual by Abraham Katzman.....	39
Try it, you'll like it.....	40
More of Jose Sequiera.....	Back Cover

RECIPES

A garden of biodegradable delights:

Luke-O-Plakia's Faceless Stroganoff (OL).....	3
Humpy Mae's Date Nut Bread (V).....	4
Biffy Mae's Vaguely Japanese Vegetables (V).....	4
Biffy Mae's New World Tofu in Peanut Sauce (V).....	5
Auntie Fatima's Sub-Saharan Slop (V).....	16
Biffy Mae's Couscous in the Morning (OL or V).....	16
Biffy Mae's Truly Tasty Spanakopita (OL).....	32
Biffy Mae's Emergency Minestrone (V).....	34
Biffy Mae's Little Bean Salad (V).....	34
Rhiella Lou's Tempeh Adobo (V).....	38
Biffy Mae's Killer Cobbler, a reprise (OL).....	38

Key: OL - Ovo-lacto dishes; V - Vegan dishes

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Photo by Mod Bob
and Billy

Dancing in the Streets

I remember seeing a filmstrip in public school ("Health" class) when I was about 12. Where I went to school, Health class was taught by rank amateurs. One teacher seemed to have only recently learned the material from books, as evidenced by his bizarre pronunciations of words like "hormones" and "atrophy" (the latter being pronounced like the two words "a trophy".) But I digress.

The filmstrip we saw that day was about birth defects. One frame showed a picture of a girl with a cleft palate, which struck me as funny looking at the time. Without thinking, I laughed out loud. Of course I got dirty looks from some of the decent kids, and the teacher emphatically told me that it was not funny.

The girl with the cleft palate obviously hadn't heard me laugh, so she wasn't offended. No one in the room had any nasty congenital defect, so I hadn't directly insulted anyone by association. But people took offense, and I learned an important lesson—that people are likely to find my sense of humor offensive. I'm not sure that's what the teacher wanted me to learn, but I don't know where he is now and I can't ask him.

These kinds of experiences mold our behavior and our feelings. Kids learn that they must be sad at funerals, they must be filled with the spirit at church, they must be happy at parties and on holidays. They must believe that our political system is the best; they must be patriotic and love our country. Buttholes are not sexy. You must dress well if you want people to like you. Long-term monogamous relationships are the ideal to aspire to. Birth defects and diseases are not funny.

The second most frequently asked question we DPN staffers get is whether or not we get much flak for our demented sense of humor. (The first most common question is "Are those your real names?") In fact, scarcely anyone gives us any shir. The junior high school Health teachers of the world (and other people who think it's wrong to laugh at photos of birth defects) evidently make an exception for those of us who have contracted the particular disease we're laughing about. Like American Express cardmembership, infection has its privileges.

I've had so much fun throwing away ingrained ideas about what I should or shouldn't do that I wonder why everyone else doesn't feel

the same way. It took me until I was 20 to accept my own sexuality, but when it happened it happened abruptly and felt fucking great. Years later, coming to terms with HIV infection also required throwing away preconceived notions, although the experience wasn't particularly abrupt or exhilarating. Adjusting to life with HIV meant giving up the idea that life was going to be totally unacceptable from that point on. Maybe you didn't feel that way when you found out you were positive, but your Humpy Editor did. Somewhere along the line, I'd gotten the idea in my head that infection with an insidious virus meant that enjoyable times as I'd known them had come to an end. Slowly, I discovered that people would still like me (some of them anyway), death wasn't immediately around the corner, and yes, the situation has an element of humor.

To be homosexual in America is to have learned to resist one particularly powerful form of societal conditioning. Some of us take that lesson much further, questioning all manner of conditioned behavior; others stop right there and are content to conform to any number of

societal norms. Just how much to conform and how much to rebel is a personal choice; it makes no sense to force someone to be a nonconformist.

Unfortunately, being gay or HIV+ guarantees nothing about one's readiness to shed conditioned thoughts. Consider how many gay men continue to whine about the display of flesh at pride celebrations. Their letters of complaint appear in gay papers and in mainstream media. Why must we show our dark side to the world, they ask. Maybe these people miss the point because it's so simple: some of us have no respect for societal taboos about nudity and sexual expression. We feel that a society that cannot accept a naked human walking down the street is rotten to the core.

Consider these words, from a recent letter to the *New York Times*: "Bosoms, genitals, and gyrating pelvises were the order of the day: Christopher Street and gay bars thrust out for the masses to choke on." (signed Jonathan F. Alex, New York, June 28, 1993).

Gotta love those words: "thrust out" and "choke on", indeed. There's more:

"Our community has been torn apart by AIDS, so why are we dancing in the streets? Let's dance in clubs or in our apartments, but when we are on Fifth Avenue together, let's show our serious and angry face to America."

I look forward to next year's parade. Hopefully, Mr. Alex will have formed his own marching contingent, with the banner "serious, angry, and proud!" Jonathan Alex and his ilk can enjoy the deep satisfaction of having not smiled, danced, or laughed on the whole parade route,

having never shown any excessive flesh. They will sleep well at night knowing that they've set a fine example. No right-wing zealots will use video footage of them to incite hatred of gay people.

Why are we dancing in the streets? It kills me that someone would ask such a question. The parades are for us, not for the rest of the world. We dance in the streets because we like being in control of our own lives. Some of us have tasted the satisfaction of choosing our feelings and behavior according to our wills; we refuse to react in expected, sanctioned, and conditioned ways.

Returning to the question of why we're dancing when there's a fucking epidemic going on: we celebrate because we want to. Why shouldn't the burden of explanation be on those who assert that we ought to be morose during epidemics? And what is it about an epidemic that's so special, anyway? Is Mr. Alex suggesting that—even with the existence of fagbashers, the Republican party, and the like—if it weren't for AIDS, things would be peachy-keen enough to justify dancing on Fifth Avenue? Please understand, I don't like seeing my friends get sick and die, and I don't much like the thought of it happening to myself, either. But I refuse to look to the Jonathan Alexes of the world for guidance on whether or not to dance in the streets.

It's the same old question—do you behave as if the world were already the way you'd like it to be, or do you compromise. One is fun and satisfying; the other feels like you're six years old, striving for Mommy's approval. Now, which do you prefer?

—T. A.

GET FAT, don't die!

Luke-O-Plakias's Faceless Stroganoff

1 lb. mushrooms, sliced
3-4 shallots, minced
2-3 tablespoons butter
white wine (optional)
garlic salt
fresh ground pepper
2-4 dashes Worcestershire sauce
1 cup sour cream
lots of paprika
½ lb. roasted unsalted cashews
cooked noodles

Toast the cashews, either in a toaster oven or in a pan, until they are lightly browned and smell nutty. Set them aside to cool. Melt the butter in a large heavy saucepan over medium-high heat, and saute the shallots until they just start to turn translucent. Toss in some wine and let it evaporate a little. Add the sliced mushrooms and cook until they shrivel and lose most of their water. (This may take a while, depending on what kind of shrooms you use, but expect at least 10 to 15 minutes.) Add the garlic salt, pepper, and Worcestershire sauce to taste, and then stir in the sour cream. Lower the heat to a simmer, and let the mixture bubble for a few minutes. Add enough paprika to color the stroganoff, and let simmer a little more. Serve over cooked noodles, and sprinkle with the roasted cashews. Yum! This dish works fine with the familiar button mushrooms, but feel free to substitute some fresh shitake or oyster mushrooms. Chanterelles and morels are a little too froofy for this hearty dish, though. (And yes, the last ingredient on the Worcestershire sauce label is anchovies. C'mon, it's just a few fish molecules. Purists may use a dark vegetable bouillon like Dr. Bronner's instead, or go hunting for that elusive vegan Worcestershire.)

GET FAT, don't die!

Humpy Mae's Awesome Date-Nut Bread

*¾ cup chopped walnuts
1 cup dates
1 ½ tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt
3 tbsps shortening
¾ cup boiling water
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 cup granulated sugar
1 ½ cups sifted flour*

Mix the first four ingredients together. Add the shortening and the boiling water; let stand for 20 minutes. Heat the oven to 350° F. Beat the fucking eggs. Add the vanilla, then the sugar and flour, beating the mixture with a fork. Add the date mixture, mixing it just enough to blend it in. Pour into a nicely lubed 9 × 5 × 3 pan and bake at 350 degrees until a toothpick comes out clean (probably a little over an hour).

Biffy Mae's Vaguely Japanese Vegetables

*Eggplant slices, 2 in. thick
Zucchini, sliced thickly lengthwise
Acorn squash, cored and sliced
¼ cup miso paste
some water
a little honey
poppy or toasted sesame seeds*

Bake the veggies on a greased pan at 350°F until they are just cooked throughout. Mix the miso paste with an equal amount of water, and add a little honey to taste. Brush the miso on top of the vegetables, and bake until the miso coating is bubbly. Remove from the oven, sprinkle with the seeds and pepper, and serve. This isn't really dinner fare, but it makes a nice appetizer.

DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL

by Emil Knightwright

Are your copies of DPN out on your coffee table, or are they safely hidden in a drawer? Do your parents know about your HIV status? Your co-workers? Many of us have little inner voices that tells us it's cool to be open about HIV status. Be careful—keep those voices at bay. There's a veritable laundry list of reasons to keep your HIV status to yourself. Not tired excuses like "I'll lose my job" or "I don't want people to worry about me," but serious reasons.

Mystery is sexy. Think of how hot strangers look from a distance, while your mind is supplying the details. Nothing you can be will ever compare to fantasy images, so keep the mystery going. As soon as a gay man finds out everything he wants to know about another man, he moves on to the next one. If you want your relationships (or whatever) to last a while, keep 'em guessing. Of course this applies to all aspects of your life, not just your HIV status. If your money comes from a trust fund, for goodness sake don't tell your tricks—keep them wondering how you manage to live the way you do.

You can always tell people later if you change your mind. If you tell now and change your mind later, you're shit out of luck.

There's no conclusive evidence that the federal government is making a list of HIV-positive individuals, but there's no conclusive evidence that it isn't, either. Why take the chance? Your best friend could be an informant.

If you tell one person, you've told them all. When people tell you they'll keep the knowledge to themselves, *they don't mean it.*

Your days may be numbered, but you must remain unselfishly focused on how you can make the world a better place for everyone. When you tell people about your status, you're in danger of being labeled an *activist*, with your credibility on all issues dropping to zero. Make Randy Shilts your role model! He kept his HIV status private for six years—no mean feat for a prominent gay journalist. Keep Randy's words on your refrigerator door for inspiration: "I don't want to be a professional AIDS patient. I'm more valuable to the gay movement as a journalist." (Replace the word *journalist* with the word of your choice.) And don't forget, the beauty of the unselfish path is that it's not without its own deeply satisfying rewards. Shilts acknowledged that if his HIV status had been public, he probably wouldn't have gotten as good a deal from the publisher of his latest book.

Don't be fooled by the seemingly uninhibited openly HIV+ people you see around you. They may appear to be fearless and well adjusted, but they've actually only succumbed to a herd mentality. Think about it; you only see "HIV+" tattoos or stickers on people in urban gay ghettos, never in Boise or Winnemucca. And don't assume that a biohazard-icon tattoo indicates that the person is infected. It's more likely just a fashion statement.



Clip and attach to your refrigerator



**"I don't want to be a
professional AIDS patient.
I'm more valuable to the gay
movement as a(n) _____."**

GET FAT, don't die!

**Biffy Mae's New World
Tofu in Peanut Sauce**

1 1/2 cups vegetable broth
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 small can stewed tomatoes
a few canned mild green chilis
2 slices of bread or 2 corn tortillas
2 tablespoons peanut butter
1 medium carrot, sliced
1 small onion, sliced
1 small clove of garlic, minced
3 tablespoons olive oil
4 whole cloves
3 whole peppercorns
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
3/4 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 pound firm tofu, cubed
cooked rice
raisins or currants (optional)



In a blender, combine the veggie broth, pepper, stewed tomatoes, green chilis, bread or tortillas, and peanut butter and blend, blend, blend until smooth. Set aside. In a large saucepan, saute the sliced carrot 'n onion over medium heat until just translucent. Add the garlic and stir it around a little. Pour in the blender fixin's and mix thoroughly. Crush the whole cloves and peppercorns in a mortar, and stir in along with the cinnamon and chili powder. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and let simmer for about 15 minutes. Gently mix in the tofu cubes, and simmer another 5 to 10 minutes. Serve over rice and garnish with the raisins. This is one of those Vegan gut-bombs, so be sure to serve this dish with something light and crunchy. Might we suggest a salad with cucumbers, tomatoes, and jicama in a light vinaigrette. (And do your tofu cubes disintegrate no matter how gentle your stirring? It's the nature of the beast. Try using smoked or fried tofu, which may hold its shape better.)

Eager Beaver

by Daniel Perdios

June: Ward, I'm worried about the Beave.

Ward: Oh, what did the Beave do now, dear?

June: Well, he refuses to clean his room. I always have to do it.

Ward: All right, dear. I'll mention it at dinner tonight.

June: It's more than that, Ward. Today I was up there cleaning his room and I had to put all his pornographic collection back into the bookshelves, and while I was there I found these needles. Ward, I'm worried.

Ward: Oh, June, he's just a boy.

June: Ward, there was no bleach... and no condoms. I'm worried. He shouldn't have needles without bleach. And he should always have condoms around. What did we teach him? Everyone knows to keep needles, bleach and condoms together.

Ward: Hun, I really don't want to have to lecture him again. Can we wait and see if he shapes up?

June: Ward, I don't know. Look at the phone bill for last month.

Ward: What are all those toll calls?

June: Beaver's been calling the sex lines. It has to be Beaver. Wally has a wonderful sex life with that pretty girl he's been seeing.

Ward: I guess.

June: Unless it's been you. But we have good sex, don't we dear?

Ward: Still. After all these years.

June: It's expensive, those calls.

Ward: Ha, ha. June, I wouldn't worry about it. He'll grow out of it. It's just a phase.

June: How's he ever going to have a sexually fulfilling relationship with someone if he's addicted to anonymous phone sex.

Ward: Well. (Chuckle) I wish they'd had phone sex when I was growing up.

June: Ward, I'm serious.

Ward: Okay, dear. I guess it is an expensive bill. Maybe we should just make him pay for the calls.

June: Oh, I don't want to do anything rash. Just a talking to will help for now.

[enter Wally]

June: Hi, Wally.

Ward: Hi Mom. Hi Dad.

June: How was your day, Wally?

Wally: Oh, not bad. Got an A on my Biology test.

Ward: Good for you, Wally. I'm proud of you. June, why can't Wally talk with the Beave.

June: Maybe you're right.

Ward: You know, brother to brother. Wally, our mother's a little worried about Beaver. Seems his room is a mess and he's been calling the sex lines.

Wally: That's pretty serious, Mom. What makes you think that?

June: I found needles in his room today and there wasn't any bleach or condoms with them.

Wally: Beave should know better than that.

Ward: Wally, would you do us a favor?

Wally: Uh, yeah, sure, Dad. What is it?

Ward: Would you talk to Beave about this? Sort of as an older brother.

Wally: Sure, Dad. No problem.

June: Oh thank you, Wally. I'm sure it'll mean more from you than if your father or I did it.

Ward: Don't you think so, Wally?

Wally: Oh sure. No one wants their old man coming down on them.

[exit Wally]

Ward: So now I'm the old man, am I?

June: Oh, I think it's cute, Ward. The old man.

Ward: Does that make you the old woman?

[Cut to Beaver's bedroom]

Wally: Hey Beave!

Beave: Hi, Wally.

Wally: Whatcha doin'?

Beave: Oh, nothin' special. Got a new magazine in the mail today. The guys in it are so hot. I was just jerkin' off to it.

Wally: Oh, that's nice, Beave.

Beave: There's a leather section in here that I really like.

Wally: Beave, we need to talk.

Beave: Sure, Wally. About what?

Wally: Mom's worried, Beave. She said she didn't find any bleach or condoms with your needles when she was cleaning your room today.

Beave: Oh, Wally. Billy and I shared only once. And we only had oral sex today.

Wally: Beave, it only takes once.

Beave: Oh, I know, Wally. But I'm not gonna get it.

Wally: You never know, Beave. I'd hate to lose my little brother, you know?

Beave: I know, Wally. You're right. I won't do it again. I just ran out of money. I was gonna buy some next week.

Wally: You can ask me, Beave. I can give you bleach or condoms. Or I can lend you the money.

Beave: Gee, that's really nice, Wally.

Wally: Sure, Beave. Mom also wants you to pick up your magazines when you're done and put them away. Can you do that, Beave? It's not asking a lot. Mom would appreciate it.

Beave: Okay, Wally. I'll try to from now on.

Wally: Great, Beave. Well, I gotta go now. I got a date with Mary Ellen again tonight.

Beave: Hey, Wally?

Wally: Yea Beave?

Beave: You're the best brother a

guy could have.

Wally: Oh thanks, Beave.

Beave: Can I have another nude photo of you?

Wally: I just gave you one last week, Beave.

Beave: I know, Wally. But it's got stains on it already.

Wally: Who did it this time, Beave—Eddie or Billy? All right, Beave, I'll get you one as soon as I can.

Beave: Gee, thanks, Wally. That's really swell.

[Back to the kitchen]

Ward: How'd everything go with the Beave, Wally?

Wally: Oh great, Dad. Beaver isn't going to forget the bleach or condoms again.

June: And what about cleaning up his room?

Wally: Oh yeah. He promises to keep it clean and put away his magazines when he's done.

Ward: There—see, June, it's best that I didn't do it.

June: Wally, what plans do you have for this evening?

Wally: Me and Mary Ellen are renting a room down at the Topper's Inn.

June: Oh, Wally. That place is such a dive. You shouldn't take a nice girl like Mary Ellen there.

Wally: Gee, Mom. Maybe you're right. We'll get a room uptown somewhere. Thanks.

June: Wally?

Wally: Yeah, Mom.

June: Do you have your condoms?

Wally: Mom. I'm not the Beave. Of course I do.

June: Oh, Ward, Wally's becoming such a man.

Ward: Just like his old man.

[June and Ward walk offstage hand in hand.]

The Experts Agree!

Exhaustive surveys among qualified professionals prove that DPN makes an ideal gift, for yourself or for anyone. DPN is timeless, goes with casual or formal attire, and contains no tropical oils. Moreover, our irregular publishing schedule will give your loved ones yet another incentive to cling to life. DPN arrives in a plain manila envelope, and we'd never sell our mailing list to some sleazy PR firm. Just send \$10 (US\$ 12 in Canada, US\$20 for international orders) to DPN, c/o Men's Support Center, P.O. Box 30564, Oakland, CA 94604. We'll even forward your birthday, Xmas, or sympathy cards with the first issue.



The Vision Thing

by Rondo Mieczkowski

I'm on the phone with the clinic. The counselor says, "Well, you're positive."

Blood rushed up from my gut—my face hot.

"Swing low/Sweet char-i-ot"

Like ice it burns. My stomach shrinks, contracts. I'm disappearing like Alice, getting tinier and tinier because she ate the wrong thing.

I figured I would be positive. I knew it. I had sex with guys who were now dead. Enough of them. Who isn't positive these days? But, to actually hear it—was something else.

Eventually, I remembered to breathe. Thanked (yes thanked!) the counselor, and hung up. My body calmed down. My brain reconnected. After finding out—after this revolution—that the rest of my life was going to be different from now on, forever and ever. My first thought was worthy of a queen: "Well, *now*, I'm never going to see Paris!"

Somehow I got through the day at work, the bus ride home, by telling myself "Oh, shut up."

"But what about—"

"Oh, shut up."

"But you know—"

"Honey. Darling. Baby. For

now, please, just shut up?"

Home—tell myself the truth. I'm HIV+. I'm HIV+. I'm HIV+. And what about you Kitty Carlisle and Orson Bean? I didn't know what to do. So I did what I always do when I don't know what to do. I went to bed. Flat on my back I let my brain bounce back and forth.

What the rest of my bloodwork going to be like? What about T-cells? What do they do? What the hell do they look like? What about wills? And sex! Telling people and not telling people? What to do, what to take? AZT or cucumber root? Should I wait for the certain cure? (If I live that long). How did this happen?

I always thought the actual cause of AIDS was just so much baloney. Literally. Folks ate carcinogenic baloney which destroyed their immune systems, and those who mostly ate cheap lunchmeat were—poor Haitians, drug addicts, and urban queens on the go. It made as much sense as anything else.

Lying there—sometimes my mind would go blank. I'd be a zero on the bed—nothing, nothing at all. And then, I had a vision.

I didn't know at the time I was having one—a vision with a capital

"V". As a kid, I tried to see visions as the sun cast rays through the stained glass in gothic St. Hedwig's church. I'd squint my eyes, looking for something, but never finding anything except dust motes swirling in the colored air. I wanted to grow up and be a saint, to help others. My unclean acts and thoughts would probably prevent sainthood, but, well, I could at least be the Pope? Even at that age I realized what a ridiculous idea that was. I mean—a Polish Pope?

Sixth grade, I was the president of the Saint Dominic Savio Fan Club. Dominic Savio was the protégé of this other late 19th century Italian saint, John Bosco, who had a particular calling to minister to young boys. Kids in class, not the serious ones like me, would sing

"Oh I love Bosco

Bosco is for me

chocolate flavored Bosco

with sunshine Vitamin C"

I thought this was sacrilegious—comparing a saint to chocolate syrup!

Now, Dominic Savio, he was one of those saints that kids were supposed to use for an example of the Catholic life. Like Saint Maria

Goretti, another Italian teenager—who was stabbed repeatedly by her neighbor, resisting his sexual advances. She forgave him on her deathbed.

I'm there in bed, thinking. Why did I bother to give up drinking? Why did I bother to give up drugs? What the fuck good did four years of celibacy do me, since it turns out I was HIV+ the whole time? Then, I had this vision.

Of course, I played Saint Dominic Savio in the school play. It was one of the perks of being president of his fan club. As he lay dying, of tuberculosis or something—he was twelve or thirteen—Saint John Bosco at his side (played by the love of my life at the time, Kevin Wieszczybinski—I was able to touch his Brylcreemed blond hair in the performance—so greasy and cool) Dominic had a vision.

His breathing grew shallower as he clasped the tear stained hand of John Bosco, "Oh Father... I see... a bright... light. It's the most... beautiful light. So bright... Oh! Oh!" And then he/I died.

Well, my vision thing, I have to say, wasn't like that. And it wasn't like Joan of Arc—angels weren't talking to me from shiny, cottony clouds, or Saint Bernadette, or that Lady of Guadalupe thing or what those kids in Portugal saw—the sun shimmer, then spin in the sky. I didn't see anybody in a misty light, or anything you might expect a vision to be like. I didn't go away. I wasn't transported. I was there in my bed the whole time.

This vision, these images, came into my mind's eye. I saw a bull, galloping toward me. He got so close I could smell his rich hide. Suddenly, there was lots of blood—

spilling, pouring, into a chalice—a cup, full of bull's blood.

That was it. That's all. It was over. I didn't really think about it. But, I knew then—somehow I knew, dammit, that what I had to do—if I wanted to live—was to put on black leather—(the bull), and

heavy black boots—(galloping toward me), to put on this, this armor—(blood, blood spilling everywhere), get out of bed and walk out into the world.



[second section of the performance piece, "Tough Tit"]

Our Page Nine Boy



Jose Sequiera

Diagnosed: 1988

Age: 28

Height: 6'1"

Weight: 172 pounds

CD4 Count: 5

Infections: You name 'em!

Medications: Fluconazole,
Sulfamethoxazole, Acyclovir,
Lamprene, Biaxin, EP04,
Myambutal, Prednisone,
but no antivirals

BUT WAIT! There's more from our delectable pin-up boy: "I'm very Catholic; I love and eat the body of Christ every Sunday. If it hadn't been for His nakedness, I probably would not have felt drawn to Him (even with the wounds)." Send in your proposals of marriage to us and we'll forward them.

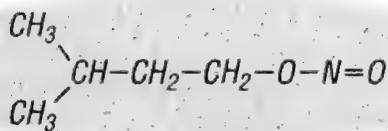
Jose's photos are courtesy of Robert Doyle.

Condom Corner
Special Report

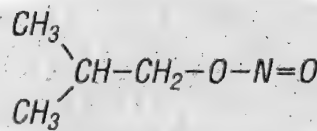
Carburetor Cleaners Compared

**“BUY THREE
BOTTLES
AND GET
A FREE
COCKRING!”**





isoamyl nitrite (C₅H₁₁NO₂)



isobutyl nitrite (C₄H₉NO₂)

Most of us know that in 1990, Congress outlawed the sale of “aromas”, chemicals otherwise known as poppers, amyl, butyl, or by an endless list of brand names. The reasons for this ban are not entirely clear; some of our august politicians say it had to do with the possible connection between poppers and Kaposi’s sarcoma (KS). Others cite animal studies where rats, when forced to inhale the human equivalent of ten bottles per day every day for three years, developed catastrophic liver failure.

It is Your Cranky Editor’s opinion that after having been the brunt of a couple of years of finger-wagging by the President’s AIDS Commission, and yet too squeamish to implement any of their recommendations, Congress picked a politically tidy way to appear as though they were doing something useful about the AIDS epidemic. Besides, they said, you can’t argue with science.

Are poppers really dangerous to people? Sure—if you drank a bottle of the stuff*. As far as long-term mutagenic effects from inhaling go, we may never know for sure. The studies that show connection with KS are based on circumstantial evidence; that is, no report to date has been able to analyze and demonstrate and reproduce a mechanism where poppers

cause KS. On the other hand, the rate of KS among people recently diagnosed with AIDS is one quarter of what it used to be in the early ’80s. It appears that there are some personal or environmental factors necessary for the development of KS, and those factors aren’t present in the same quantities that they used to be. Poppers? Other recreational drugs? *Polo* cologne? Who knows.

It is now illegal to sell aromas. It is, however, legal to sell carburetor cleaner. For example, Creative Marketing of Palm Desert, California, sells a carburetor cleaner that’s guaranteed to invigorate your pistons, make your engine pulsate, and no doubt improve the performance of the rear differential as well. It costs \$15 per bottle, and originally came with an introductory cock ring if you purchased three bottles. The order form had you state that you would use this product solely for automotive purposes, that you were at least 21 years of age, and that you weren’t a law enforcement officer.

One of your fearless editors, being a do-it-yourself type, ordered some of this carburetor cleaner. He complained that the vapors were less pleasant than past carburetor cleaners he had used while making manual adjustments to his hardware. Another of your editors accidentally inhaled this same product, and had an allergic reaction of epic proportions, including asthma-like impaired breathing and angry red welts that lasted for almost

a day. Gee, maybe the stuff really was carburetor cleaner! This is how our story began.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF POPPERS

Some of our younger readers may be scratching their heads and wondering what the hell we’re talking about. Well pull up a chair, little ones, and we’ll tell you about the sins of the past. You see, there’s this chemical by the name of amyl nitrite. Its main pharmacological use is for relieving angina, a severe pain in the chest that people with heart problems can have. Pharmaceutical grade amyl nitrite comes in small cloth-wrapped glass vials, much like smelling salts, which one would snap or pop open. You’d then inhale the released vapors. This is where the term “poppers” came from.

So why would lithe young (or at least young at heart) creatures such as ourselves be interested in a drug snorted by the cholesterol-ridden elderly? Because poppers do more than just open up blood vessels, they seem to open up just about everything in the body. During an amyl rush, a person’s pain threshold is elevated, and there’s an incredible feeling of being—well, maybe not being alive, but at least of being *there*. Someone once said that a good batch of poppers “makes you feel like you have eight assholes, and they all want to be fucked.” A dear friend of ours added that “poppers can make the dick that’s in your mouth seem the biggest, juiciest, most

*Some brands have been known to burn holes through carpeting and upholstery when spilled.

succulent, best—no, the *only*—dick in the universe.” Well, they’re both right.

A good hit of amyl is light and sweet, with a visceral rush that seems to command the loins to pump to the rhythm of the accelerated heartbeat. When exposed to air, amyl nitrite degrades rapidly. A bad hit from old poppers causes a more cranial kind of pounding, with hotness around the ears not unlike that embarrassed feeling you got in elementary school, when the teacher singled you out for public ridicule.

Poppers had a place outside the bedrooms and smut huts of America as well. Many a disco diva would take a hit while gyrating to a particularly moving line of *Gloria*. Your Cranky Editor would occasionally do a hit in Space Mountain at Disneyland, just before the rollercoaster ride started. (This was no small feat, considering that hidden surveillance cameras watch your every move within those attractions.)

Amyl nitrite was originally easy to find in ampoules. Men and some women of a variety of perversions would ensure freshness by cracking a single ampoule at a time and then dropping it into a special bullet-shaped inhaler. This would allow the single popper to last for about one fuck’s duration, and the inhaler could be conveniently worn on a chain around the neck.

Over time, these ampoules became harder to find without a doctor’s prescription, and bulk amyl appeared on

the scene. Still called poppers, this stuff was amyl nitrite, perhaps with a pinch of some other volatile compounds. It was packaged in a distinctive small brown glass bottle, the dark color to protect the contents from degradation caused by exposure to light. In time, over-the-counter sales of amyl in any form for human consumption became illegal in many states. So people turned to butyl.

Butyl nitrite doesn’t supply as good a rush as amyl, but was believed to have a longer shelf life and be cheaper to make. Various brands of aromas or “room odorizers” (*Rush*, *Bolt*, *Thrust*, *Hardware*, names you may remember from the dim past) were made of this stuff. The majority of the buying public was satisfied, but if you were just too old-fashioned, locally grown amyl, sold as diesel-fuel additive or something else equally frightening, could be found under the counter.

In time, butyl nitrite was outlawed, and people turned to propyl nitrite. Congress finally got tired of this creeping rebellion and outlawed the sale of aromas for human ingestion altogether, using language that referred to broad categories of chemicals rather than specific compounds. As we’ll see later, there are loopholes in even this intentionally broad-based law.

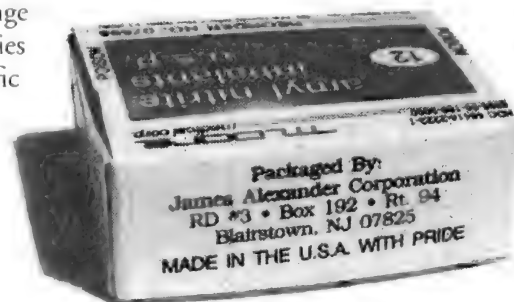
With the ban of aromas in 1990, these substances went

underground. All sorts of expensive “solvents” in those suspicious little brown bottles started to appear in the classified ads of the gay rags. Carburetor cleaner, leather cleaner, video head cleaner, silver detarnisher, and additives to reduce mildew buildup in your hot tub. As mentioned earlier, it was an unpleasant encounter with this grey market that planted the idea for this article. What finally prodded us into serious research was a catalogue from J.R.M. Manufacturing of New York. They weren’t peddling carburetor cleaner, they were selling *Rush*, *Bolt*, *Thrust*, *Hardware*, all labelled as “aromas”! How could this be? On top of that, they also offered pharmaceutical amyl nitrite ampoules. Time for investigative journalism.

We collected six different samples of these questionable compounds from four sources across the country. The kind professionals at a nearby firm, Surface Science Laboratories, agreed to perform the necessary analyses for us at a fraction of the commercial rate. Humpy Editor Tommy will now take over and tell you about what we learned. We think you’ll find the results very interesting. —B.T.

THE PROOF’S IN THE PUDDING

Analyzing samples like these is a bit more complicated than you’d expect from watching old Batman episodes.



To find out what was in those brown bottles, Surface Science Labs used a variety of techniques: gas chromatography, mass spectrometry, infrared spectroscopy, and (to resolve one final detail) nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy.

The pharmaceutical ampoules contained good ol' isoamyl nitrite ($C_5H_{11}NO_2$), just like they're supposed to. (The U. S. Pharmacopeia specifies either of two subtly different isomers of amyl nitrite for this product.) They also contained a small amount of an amyl alcohol ($C_5H_{11}OH$), probably a leftover ingredient from synthesis of the amyl nitrite.

The leather cleaner was found to be reasonably pure isoamyl nitrite, also with a minimal amyl alcohol impurity. Whereas the ampoules apparently had only one isomer of amyl nitrite, the leather cleaner contained two different ones, which isn't a big deal but suggests a less tightly controlled manufacturing process. The leather cleaner also contained a fair amount of an unrelated ester, probably glycerol triacetate, also known as triacetin. Triacetin is nontoxic, and is used as a fixative in perfumery—which means it helps prevent rapid evaporation. However, it's also a solvent used in tanning, so use this cleaner with caution—it might affect the color of dyed leather.

Creative Marketing's carburetor cleaner was the most complex of all the samples—a veritable witches' brew. It had some amyl nitrite in it, yes, but that wasn't the main component. There was more amyl alcohol than amyl nitrite, suggesting slovenly manufacturing procedure. It also contained various esters and other unidentified compounds. We were impressed, but didn't try cleaning any carburetors with this mélange of

#1—"Brown Bottle" Leather Cleaner, available locally in San Francisco.

A light and sweet brew, with an initial hint of fruitiness followed by musky aromas and ending with a gym-sock like aftertaste. The rush builds quickly and is long-lasting, but displays a pervasive feeling of warmth that some may find disagreeable. Price: \$30 per 3-dram bottle.

#2—Creative Marketing's "Brown Bottle" Carburetor Cleaner, from Palm Desert.

A harsh and bitter rotgut, with foul metallic overtones and hints of refineries, tarpits, and refrigerator munge. The rush offers little pleasure and much headache, with a choppy, high and bumpy finish followed by asthma and angry red welts in the experience of one reviewer. Definitely the least favorite of the review committee. Price: \$15 per 3-dram bottle.

#3—Double Eagle, from the streets of New York City.

This is a fairly bland elixir, with a faint bouquet of swimming pools and and shower tile cleaner. The carnal features of the rush are all but imperceptible, creeping up on such a shallow slope that one hardly notices its arrival. It is followed by a reddening of the face and a vague feeling of disappointment. Price: \$7.00 per 3-dram bottle.

#4—Moore Pharmaceuticals' amyl nitrite ampoules, courtesy of JRM Manufacturing of New York City

Here's an elegant vintage, with a more subtle nose, faintly reminiscent of bananas. The profile of the rush is very clean, with a gentle rise, a deeply penetrating and sustained plateau, followed by an equally gentle finish. Although this sample was the most powerful in its effects, it left but a trace of headache. The unanimous favorite of your diligent review committee. Price: \$49.95 for a box one a dozen 0.3 cc ampoules.

#5—JRM's own "Brown Bottle".

A disappointing brand, similar to sample #3 in profile and chemical content. Price: \$3.50 per 3-dram bottle.

#6—Rush brand room odorizer, courtesy of JRM.

A strong-smelling broth, with notes of scouring cleanser and bathroom bowl-brightener, followed by faint musty undertones. Despite the olfactory shortcomings, the rush is relatively smooth, with a sustained and gradual finish. Price: \$3.50 per 2-dram bottle.

#7—Aldrich Chemical Co. laboratory-grade butyl nitrite, for reference purposes only.

This sample greets the connoisseur with a particularly strong chlorine aroma. This could be exacerbated by the unusually large bottle, which allows quite a bit of air to become saturated with vapors. Evacuating the stale air in the bottle with a few judicious puffs from the lips improves the smell, though an iodine-like background is still noticeable. The rush is very strong, with an abrupt finish. Price: not for household use.

organic nasties. DPN notes that well-known, proven carburetor cleaners are available at auto supply stores for a fraction of the price of Creative Marketing's product, and they may well be less toxic.

The remaining three samples all contained isobutyl nitrite

($C_4H_9NO_2$). This has a structure slightly different from the reference n-butyl nitrite from Aldrich Chemical Co, which could account for the difference in smell and subjective effects noted by our panel as a result of accidental inhalation.

Of the samples containing

GET FAT, don't die!

Auntie Fatima's Sub-Saharan Slop

*1/4 cup olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 each red and green bell peppers,
seeded and chopped
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
2 small sweet potatoes, peeled and cut
into 1/2-inch cubes
2 large tomatoes, chopped
1 15-ounce can garbanzos, drained
1 medium zucchini, coarsely chopped
Couscous*

I know this sounds like an extremely unlikely combination of ingredients, so try it out as vengeance on those vegan friends of yours who have subjected you to rice cakes all these years. Heat the oil in a kettle and saute the onion and bell pepper until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the coriander and cinnamon, mix thoroughly, and add the sweet potato cubes, and stir for 2 minutes more. Add the tomato, about a 1/2-cup water, the garbanzos, and the zucchini. Cover and simmer for about 15 minutes, or until the potatoes are cooked. Serve over couscous which has been cooked according to the package instructions.

Biffy Mae's Couscous in the Morning

*prepared couscous
a pinch of cinnamon
butter
brown sugar or honey
raisins or dried currants*

So Auntie Fatima's sub-Saharan delicacy didn't win you over, and you have this half-empty box of couscous. Make it up like you would any hot cereal, you uncultured infidel.

isobutyl nitrite, Rush was the most pure, evidencing good quality control. The Double Eagle brand and J.R.M.'s room odorizer were practically identical and only slightly less pure, containing some isobutyl alcohol impurity (probably leftover from the manufacturing process) and minimal amounts of other components.

After butyl nitrites were banned starting in 1989, propyl nitrite ($C_3H_7NO_2$) appeared for sale in some areas. Although our panel didn't have any samples of propyl nitrite available for evaluation, your Humpy Editor recalls that propyl was distinctly inferior to butyl or amyl nitrite in smell and in subjective effect. Evidently tired of this cat-and-mouse game of new formulas, Congress later passed a more comprehensive law¹ banning all volatile alkyl nitrites. Propyl, butyl and amyl nitrite are all alkyl nitrites—they have saturated hydrocarbon chains—so they should be illegal, right? Almost. The law allows sales for commercial purposes (*tert*-butyl nitrite, for example, is a jet propellant), which explains the labeling of our samples as leather cleaner, carburetor cleaner, and so on. Get 'em while you can.

Amyl nitrite and butyl nitrite are both somewhat unstable, decomposing when exposed to water or light, and last longer when refrigerated. They're also quite flammable, and can cause death if swallowed—people have committed suicide that way (not recommended).

Amyl nitrite ampoules aren't used much in medicine any more, partly because it's hard to control the dosage of a drug taken by inhalation. Amyl has a bad rep in the medical commu-

nity: "Its use is conspicuous and dramatic. Its administration is punctuated by the explosive noise of the vial breaking and its pervasive, unpleasant odor. Everyone at hand is soon aware of it, some even suffering headache. Consequently it is usually limited to instances in which speed is the prime consideration."² And, according to one textbook, "Amyl nitrite...and some related compounds have been drugs of abuse that have been claimed by some to produce a brief augmentation of sexual excitement—possibly as a subjective interpretation of the faintness and confusion consequent to hypotension and cerebral hypoxia."³ Huh. I guess whoever wrote that doesn't get fucked.

Alkyl nitrites relax various muscles, probably by interfering with enzyme systems necessary for maintaining muscle tone. They relax smooth muscles in the circulatory system, causing blood vessel dilation, which relieves angina by making the heart's job easier. The headache often associated with poppers is at least partially caused by dilation of blood vessels in the head. In addition, nitrites bond with hemoglobin in the blood; excessive doses can impair the blood's oxygen carrying capability. As mentioned earlier in this article, the link between nitrites and KS is unclear. Some think poppers are incredibly pernicious, while others say they're relatively benign when used in moderation.

Figure 1 shows the results from gas chromatography analysis of the leather cleaner. A gas chromatograph is useful for separating complex samples into their component parts for further analysis; different compounds

¹ Title 15 U.S.C.A. §2057b, as enacted under the Crime Control Act of 1990.

² Modell, Walter, *Drugs of Choice* 1972-73, C. V. Mosby Co., St. Louis, 1972, pp. 377-378.

³ Smith and Reynatd, *Textbook of Pharmacology*, Philadelphia, V. B. Saunders Co., 1992, p. 631.

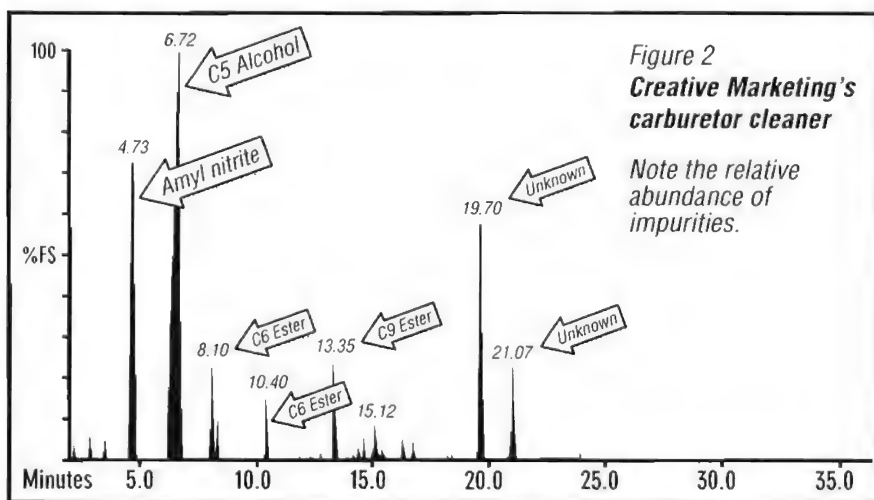
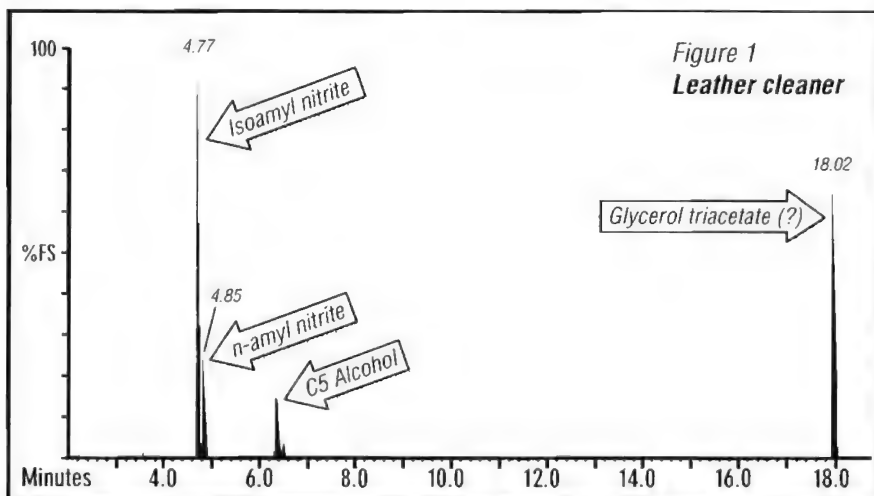
take different amounts of time to propagate through the machine's column. Each spike in the graph corresponds to a particular component in the mixture. The spikes in this graph are labeled to identify the various components.

Note the contrast between Figures 1 and 2. Whereas Figure 1 indicates a relatively simple mixture, Figure 2 shows all manner of garbage. Our budget didn't allow for further analysis to determine the exact identity of each individual component of this stuff.

Nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy was used to nail down the

particular isomer of butyl nitrite present in *Rush* and other brands, and to verify that it was an alkyl nitrite and not an alkenyl nitrite which wouldn't have been covered by the law.

We can't guarantee what will happen to you if you inhale any of these things. Nor can we claim that this is a comprehensive study because of the small number of samples used. However, since we did purchase these products in the real world, the results reflect what you *could* receive if you were to buy them for your own use. As with all substances at the fringes of legality, *caveat emptor*. —T.A.

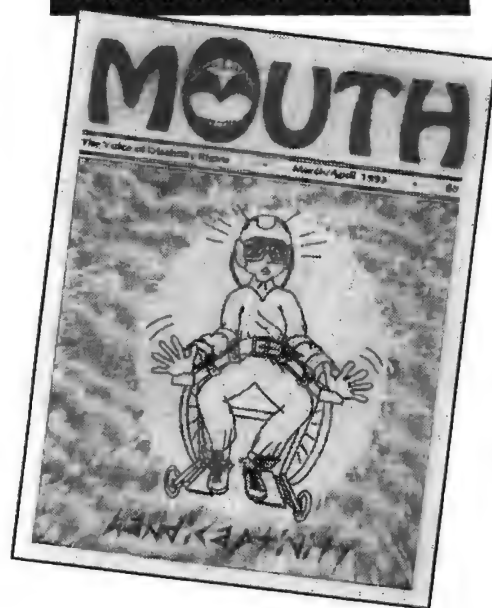


TechnoNaughtiness

Wouldn't you know, not only is this issue of DPN the most behind schedule, it's also the most technology en-crust-ed. Could these two facts be re-lated? We certainly hope not, considering that we fondle ourselves while thinking about the size of our RAM caches, and would never want to turn back. The manuscript for DPN #8 was written in or converted to Microsoft Word; perverse YHE Tommy enters text in vi. Artwork was composed in Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Dimensions, Ray Dream Designer, and Ray Dream's Add-Depth. Photographs were corrected, re-touched, and composited in Adobe Photoshop. Final assembly was in Quark XPress, using a Macintosh IICI, Quadra 700, and Quadra 950. The cover photograph was scanned with an Agfa Arcus scanner at 600 dpi. The cover plates were output directly to a Heidelberg GTO-DI four color printing press. Black and white photos were scanned on a lowly old Microtek ScanMaker. The guts of this issue were output to a Linotronic 330 at 100 lpi/1200 dpi, and the printing for the inside pages was by offset lithography. Need a homo-friendly printer? Call Rick Bowser of LaserForm in Redwood City, California: (415) 366-7180.

Remember, a good rag is not made by the power of one's hardware (though it helps) but by the power of the message. People will avidly read a paste-up and photocopy zine if they like the content; we resort to high tech because it's what we do for a living.

Resource Guide



MOUTH—THE VOICE OF DISABILITY RIGHTS

*"Keeping the professionals honest
since 1989"*

Here's a chilling publication put out by people with just the right sort of bad attitude. As someone who's spent the past few months snuffling about for a handicapped car placard and Shanti-sponsored discount tickets to *Elektra*, I'm a little embarrassed by my ignorance of some of the issues covered here. The March/April '93 features articles on excessive punishments as treatment for behavioral disorders in psychiatric institutions and public schools.

When treating destructive behavior, it seems all too easy to forever extend the list of inappropriate behaviors *ad infinitum*. For example, hitting, biting, self mutilation, or destroying property are certainly things to be discouraged. With that in mind, early intervention would

be the next logical step. By following that line of reasoning, improperly trained health professionals subject their detainees to electric shock, loud noise, and inhalation of ammonia for such signs of "intent to misbehave" as looking (or not looking) at the hospital staff, speaking (or not speaking) when (not) spoken to, having to use (or not use) the restroom, or a host of things that would go unnoticed in the outside world.

Along the same lines is an article about the overprescription of Ritalin to inner-city elementary school children who have been inappropriately labelled as hyperactive. In classes where as many as one quarter of the children are on Ritalin, one has to ask whether it is the children or the teacher that suffers from some sort of pathology.

On the lighter side, there's a Consumer Reports style comparison test of some of the popular forms of operant conditioning in psychiatric institutions. *Mouth's* fearless volunteers braved The Rolling Pinch (deemed "merely uncomfortable" by the medical establishment), the classic Nine-Volt Battery on the Tongue, the invigorating Ice-Water Bath, and finally Oral Hygiene Therapy (a.k.a. Washing Your Mouth Out With Shaving Cream). Yum!

Mouth is available at a variety of yearly (six-issue) subscriptions: a few bucks for the impoverished, \$12 for the basic cripple with an income, \$20 for aiding and abetting disability rights, \$36 for monolithic institutions (two subscriptions plus money for one hardship case), and \$48 for good-

hearted professionals (one sub plus moolah for three hardship subs). Send your legal tender to *Mouth*, 61 Brighton St., Rochester, NY 14607. Add \$5 for foreign subscriptions. *Mouth* is available on audiocassette for those who are visually or lexically impaired.

OLYMPIA AIDS TASK FORCE provides direct services, education, and outreach to the Thurston County area of Washington State. If you would like to provide practical support, man the switchboard, help with educational presentations, or assist on committees, please contact Nanci at the OATF office, 203 E. 4th #304, Olympia, WA 98501 or call (206) 352-2375.

Hot diggity! Our friends at *Being Alive* have launched *CONNECT!*, a friendship network for HIVers. Subscribers receive a newsletter with almost a thousand personals, and are updated on Being Alive sponsored events in the Los Angeles area. *Connect!* adheres to the "put up or shut up" rule, which means that you must place an ad in order to receive the newsletter. The cost is a minimum donation of \$10, and you there's no limit to the size of your listing (though moderation is appreciated, I'm sure). For more write *Connect!* c/o *Being Alive*, 3626 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026.

Do you know of a worthy organization that's too poor or politically correct to pay our exorbitant display rates? Let us know, and we'll give them a few free paragraphs here in the Resources section. —B.T.

Submitted for your approval, young graphic designer Brian Covell. Brian lives by his sharp mind and trained eye, using a language that few of us can speak, but that few do not understand. Join us now as he steps over the threshold of creativity and tumbles through the corridors of the mind. We will view a landscape witnessed by few, we will witness the...

Landscapes of

IMAGINATION

A single broad ascender commands the attention of the casual viewer. Classic proportions add interest and value to the display, enhancing marketability.

SEX!

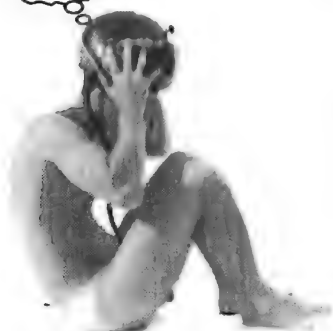
Geometric shapes in a crenulated motif (layered beneath a luscious yet inscrutable mask of purest midnight black) offer a sultry invitation.

DPN Reader Profile

SEX!



SEX!



SEX!



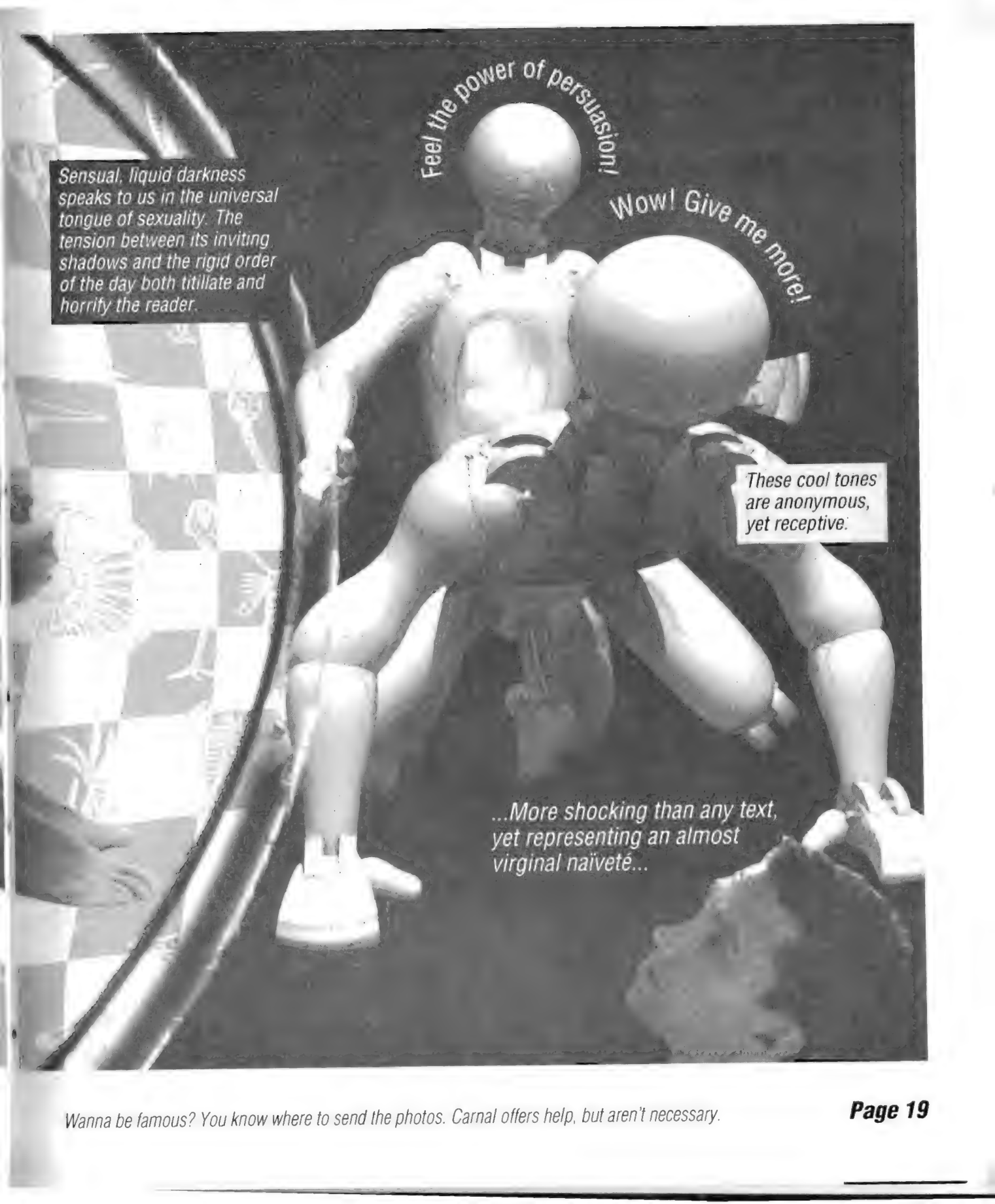
SEX!



One is beguiled into investigating these shapes. If viewed through the celebrated lens of skepticism, logical and dignified patterns may emerge.



The eye is drawn to fulsome, rounded shapes where it may dwell for some time. It is here that the wise merchant will best showcase his wares.



*Sensual, liquid darkness
speaks to us in the universal
tongue of sexuality. The
tension between its inviting
shadows and the rigid order
of the day both titillate and
horrify the reader.*

Feel the power of persuasion!

Wow! Give me more!

*These cool tones
are anonymous,
yet receptive.*

*...More shocking than any text,
yet representing an almost
virginal naïveté...*

CENTERFOLD BOY



Age: 25

Height: 5'10"

Weight: 170 pounds

CD4 Count: Unknown

Likes: Caffeine, testosterone, ethanol

Dislikes: IQs less than 160, bumpy penises,
and epitaphs that rhyme



B R I A N C O V E L L

But we are mere voyeurs in this land of Brian's, this land of the imagination. We can only gather a few drops from his fount of wisdom and press them to our parched lips, then we must leave. What grand insights are we missing? What noble endeavors are waiting to be done? We may never know for sure...we can only watch from afar and speculate.



Dead Boyfriends Society

by I. M. Naughtbitter

Some of you may have noticed one of the most pressing (and depressing) of all the crises facing us who have survived into the '90s: the Acute Boyfriend Shortage (ABS).

The Boyfriend Shortage was brought about by the increasing popularity of the exclusive private club known as the *Dead Boyfriends Society* (DBS). So far, over 100,000 young men have paid the initiation fee and joined DBS, leaving a huge gap in the Potential Boyfriend Pool (PBP) and leaving thousands of us Without a Fuck Buddy or Movie Date (WFBOMD).

If you think I'm imagining things or perhaps exaggerating out of an overactive and twisted sense of reality, then try this simple test on yourself: think back to the time you had a boyfriend. Come up blank? Can you remember back that far?

Still don't believe me? Here's another test: open up your little black book, the one that used to be filled with page after page of phone numbers of cute guys. Chances are it's like mine, and looks less like an address book and more like a Directory to the Afterlife. I've spent a small but very real fortune on magic markers to put in all those little black X's.

In the past, I always maintained that the best way to deal with ex-boyfriends is to kill them when you break up. That way you won't have to run into them on the street. It's an ideal that I've aspired,

but seldom lived up to. But then, we live in a less than ideal world.

As attractive as the idea of shooting several of my ex-beaux is, I've been spared the expense of having to buy ammo to do away with 'Those I No Longer Date (TINLD) because of... The Dead Boyfriends Society! (By the way, a movie by the same name is already in the works, directed by Fassbinder, written by Colin Higgins and starring Rock Hudson, Brad Davis, and a cast of thousands!)

My best friend David (also dead, different club) used to say that the reason my boyfriends die is because I'm so hard on them. I think this assessment is a bit harsh, even if nearly every man I've ever slept with is dead.

Going to the trouble of catching a fatal disease just to get away from me seems a bit extreme. Still, I don't totally discount the possibility. The afterlife is, according to those who claim to know, peaceful, perfect, and probably doesn't include neurotic, demanding, egotistic lovers with all their insecurities.

In 1983, my true love joined the DBS. Having been basically single since then, I have thought about this topic a lot. My conclusion: I need to get fucked long and hard and repeatedly over a number of years until I'm going to feel good about the subject. A number of years. But how to fulfill this need?

There are all sorts of services available to those in need: hot meal delivery,

food banks, free clinics, shelters, transit discounts, support groups, counseling, and a host of others. So why not a Boyfriend Placement Service? I'll tell you why not: it's the insidious creeping influence of the Dead Boyfriends Society and the resulting Boyfriend Shortage! There are no boyfriends left! Boyfriend Pool: empty.

To save you some trouble, I list for you here the major avenues that are, in my experience, ineffective for finding a boyfriend: burning candles or incense, praying to any of the major or minor gods, blind dates, being fixed up by friends, art openings, bars, cafes, dinner parties, church services, support groups, cruising the supermarket, personal ads, chance encounters, and especially begging, whining, pleading and throwing things. Nothing seems to work, and, after years of research trial and error, I've come up with no solutions.

Recent statistical data indicate that you are more likely to die in a plane crash than meet the man of your dreams. Not only that, statistics point to the fact that you'll probably be dead by the time they publish the next statistics. Again, my friends tell me that I'm too negative. Bullshit!

By all indications the boyfriend is an endangered species, encountered (if at all) only in obituaries, old photo albums, and girl-group songs from the '50s. Fortunately for those of us left without one, there is no Dildo Shortage!



signs of

How can you tell the difference between a dead PWA and a living HIVer? You may assume that this is an easy task, but a friend of mine recently came across two checklists designed to help those who are confused by such issues. It was printed in a manual for "caregivers" of PWAs, written from a "death-teddy" (i.e., "let me share the spiritual charge of your death and/or terminal 'healing' by hugging you while you slowly expire") perspective.

The first check-list offers "*signs and symptoms of approaching death.*" It warns: "*Not all these symptoms will appear at the same time and some or all may never appear.*" Be that as it may, here are some of the listed indicators:

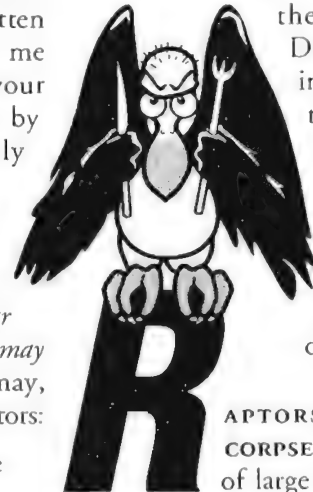
- ▶ Increased sleeping during the day, difficult to arouse.
- ▶ Confusion about time and place and identity of close and familiar people. (Both of these sound like Ronald Reagan to me.)
- ▶ Death rattle. (Never a good sign.)

Those of you who fail to correctly interpret the helpful hints listed above can try the next checklist for "Signs of Death."

- ▶ No breathing.
- ▶ No heartbeat.
- ▶ Loss of control of bowel and bladder.
- ▶ No response to shaking or shouting.

I have some misgivings about that last item, "no response to shaking or shouting," as it conjures up uncomfortable images of the slightly inept caregiver slapping a PWA corpse while yelling "Yo, dude! Are you alive or what? Yo!" Therefore, I would like to propose some additions to

the "Signs of Death" checklist, in the hope that these subtle clues can clinch the question without resorting to raised voices or agitating dying HIVers.



RAPTORS DEVOURING CORPSE. The presence of large scavenger birds (e.g., crows, vultures, bald eagles) nibbling on your ex-lover's body generally indicates death. In the future, when housekeeping for terminal HIVers, avoid leaving unscreened windows open.

PERSISTENT MORTUARY SALES PITCHES. Repeated calls from funeral services vendors may be premature, but you might as well check. They often have better access to hospital records than you do. Remember that—at least in California—special surcharges for handling HIVer corpses have been ruled illegal.

ABRUPT CESSATION OF SARCASM. If your caregivee no longer makes nasty comments when you perform Louise Hay-style affirmations over him with your crystal, it may be





THE DPN MEAT MARKET

Yes indeed, once again a few of our readers have selflessly placed themselves on the auction block, so let's not disappoint them. Here's the way it works: if the apple of your eye has a regular address, you can send them adoring letters of appreciation with no further intervention from us. If they have chosen to use a tastefully discreet DPN Basket, put the basket number on the envelope that contains your letter. Put a stamp on that envelope, and put it into another envelope and mail it to us. We'll forward it. The Meat Market is one of the best bargains around; the first 50 words are free, each additional word is 10¢. Moreover, you can be as politically incorrect as you want, but you may not use the term "straight acting."

that he's developed a more "healing" attitude, or he may just have croaked.

RELATIVES LOOTING APARTMENT.

The sudden presence of distant aunts, cousins, siblings, parents, etc. (who previously shunned the HIVer as an unrepentant sinner) shuffling about the premises and pocketing small (or not so small) valuable items such as watches, rings, cash, carpets, artwork, furniture, appliances, etc. may be a sign of death. It is, however, an unreliable indicator as such activity can occur will before termination in a competitive family. Loudly announcing that it's time to change the sick's adult diaper or bedpan is a good way to clear the room of these offensive vermin.

If you have come across any reliable and informative warning signs, please let us know about them. PWAs are at the cutting edge of thanatology, and seem likely to remain there for some time. —M.B.



Voracious Size Queen is starving at life's banquet, seeks help from hot, horny, and hung DPN readers to give urgently needed tonsil massages to reduce that swelling in my loins and cure my oral anorexia. I'm 31, 6', 170 pounds, with dirty blond hair and blue eyes. I live in Honolulu (tourists welcome) but love to travel and exchange hot letters and photos. Write me, *Pariah in Paradise*, P.O. Box 88031, Honolulu, HI 96830-8031.

Long-term AIDS survivor living in Lakewood, OH (a place with a charm all its own, not visible to the naked eye). People here think that I'm a pretty radical activist type of guy, so by coastal standards I'm fairly moderate. I'm 37, 5'8", 130 pounds, with something resembling a decent body, brown eyes, and very little hair. For you folks into real kink, I have a femoral brouviac catheter in place at this time. I'm bisexual (really! and out to both my gay and straight friends) and pretty flexible sexually speaking. My status as a member of the independently poor allows me to pursue all kinds of interests that are too eccentric to discuss here. I'm interested in contact with other PWAs who still have active grey matter, for anything from witty exchange of banter to feral rutting in the woods. Reply to DPN Basket #16.

Queer White Male; 42; HIVer; attractive; blond hair, hazel eyes; very healthy; 5'10", 165 pounds, good body; spiritual, gentle, compassionate, usually dominant. Interests: exercise, alternative therapies, health, meditation, sex (vanilla to occasional hardcore). Looking for buddies, sex, mate(s) with right attitude. You: Queer white or latin male, 18-40s, good shape, affectionate, attractive, primarily oral but versatile; my equal or submissive; sense of pride, honor, and humor. No BS. Home is Sacramento (for now) with frequent trips to San Francisco, San Diego, and Scottsdale, Arizona. Phone (916) 971-0176, but not after 10 pm Pacific time, please. Reply with a photo to DPN Basket #17.

Aunt Kaposi Returns!

The last time I faced my troops on these pages, a year ago, I thought I was dying. That is not an unusual situation for your Aunt Kaposi to find herself in these days, but worthy of note nonetheless. As I recall, I wrote the first installment of *Aunt Kaposi's Advice to the Loveworn* lying on my back with cryptococcal meningitis in the Cedars Sinai AIDS ward, "shake and bake" IV on the right arm, blood transfusion on the left. You can imagine what a wonderful time I had, cackling away, putting dementia to good use beneath the gaze of the solemn hospital attendants watching me write on a yellow legal pad to all my beloved pariahs.

The response from DPN was overwhelming. Letters and inquiries poured in from all over the immune-suppressed globe, wanting to know more of my joie de secret. How I manage to know everything and absolutely dip shit at the same time. And do I have the solution yet to all the world's problems, personal and collective? Do I have the solution? The answer, my dear pariahs, is yes, yes, yes! Of course, and not a minute

too soon. To win, you must surrender. Yes, Aunt Kaposi has returned with the key to everlasting life (or a few more months, whichever way you look at it.)

I told you then in the Fall of '91 that you wouldn't see me again until I gained ten pounds and got my hair back. And here I am, *la voila*.

The truth is your Aunt Kaposi has gained back over thirty pounds of what she lost to the little virus. I look fabulous. From 145 to 177 pounds of pure muscle and intermittent diarrhea. I have a tan, and more T cells than I care to claim. And my hair is curling luxuriantly again, with the right shampoo.

The last time I wrote you was the day before I went home from the hospital. As it turns out, they wanted me to stay longer and then continue my "shake and bake" treatment as an outpatient for four months. I said, no way. Let me out of here. Give me a pill, or give me death. You Aunt Kaposi confesses she was not a good trooper about the catheter. Out, out, damn tube, I insisted to my trusted physicians. So instead of receiving amphotericin for four hours intravenously three days a

week for several months, I take a pill, once a day, for like, for luck. *La chayim*.

And as luck will have it, it worked. The meningitis retreated over the months to a scarce speck of its former glory.

And your Aunt Kaposi is back to answer all your questions. In person. A true survivor of brain damage.

First, a quick word on diarrhea.

After I got out of the hospital, I was vomiting and shitting constantly. I decided to put my head down on my pillow (I couldn't lift it anyway) and expire to the Great Victory reserved for all mortals: death. But then something happened. My neighbor Troy baked me three dozen delicious chocolate chip cookies. I ate them all within a few hours, and before I knew it, my energy started to rumble. I remembered that all-important first principle of continuing existence: surrender to the sweet and succulent.

Unfortunately, after that my diarrhea continued for eight or nine months.

I tried every remedy there is to plug me up. All the medications,

mainstream, experimental, alternative, herbs, drops, needles, enemas, diets of all shapes and forms, and nothing could convince my parasites to cool it.

It's very hard to fall in love these days. Even harder with diarrhea.

But that's what happened to your Aunt Kaposi.

Your Aunt Kaposi decided one day to fall in love with her diarrhea. I decided to let it all run out. Surrender to the shit.

I borrowed \$5000 for food, stuffed myself every day, and exploded on a thousand toilets constantly. From L.A. to Texas, I packed it in, every kind of food I could imagine, then transmigrated it into a torrential stream of liquid me. I learned, for the first time, how to really let go. I didn't actually have a choice, or so I was reassured. The doctors told me it's impossible for we girls with low T-cells (mine were down to 3, 2, or 1, like the traditional Hopis) to rid ourselves entirely of Cryptosporidium. I said, thank God, I'm sorta used to my parasites. I kinda love the frequent farters. It's like built-in bulimia, and there are other advantages as well. Think of all the reading you can get done if you station a bookshelf next to your john. At first, I was ashamed to be a living fount of shit, like everybody else. Then I saw the light rushing down the bowl. Diarrhea is perfect. You can build a good life around diarrhea. I wanted to bring my diarrhea to Geraldos or Oprah's show (People Who Love Their Shit), but then I thought, no, only a pariah would understand the bliss of zero anal retention.

Surrender to that shit.

Now the latest development and most current impossible mortal challenge for Aunt Kaposi is when a big red lump formed on the tip of my nose last month. I guess I forgot my sunscreen for the Gay Pride parade, and the next day, *voila* an earthquake right on the end of my fucking nose. I tried powder, cover-up, ointments, zit cream, Chinese cocaine, wheat grass, acupuncture, salves, and spells. But it just got bigger and bigger. Every time your Aunt Kaposi looked in the mirror, she saw the Phantom of the Opera. To others it was just another eruption of pus and blood, but to me, your Aunt Kaposi, it was quite tragic. I thought, this is it. I cannot survive such ugliness. They can do anything to my organs and bowels, but not my face. My face which radiated so much beauty in bygone decades before video cameras.

Then, days before major surgery was scheduled to remove the blight, Aunt Kaposi looked in the mirror and decided, no surgery. Even if it's malignant, it's mine. And I was perfectly content to carry forever (or a few months, whichever way you look at it) my festering cesspool on the tip of my nose. Surrender to the grotesque and unsightly.

Suddenly, the doc called up and said the lab says it's not cancer. I won't need the surgery after all. And he prescribed pills galore, all of which I have devoured. Your Aunt Kaposi takes more pills than anyone. For me, taking pills is a full-time job. And I'm good at my work. I know instinctively the pills I take 5 times a day, 3 times a day,

once a week. I get a call from some minaret to fall to my knees and absorb Allah.

And so I am happy to report that I have gained back all my weight, the diarrhea visits only when it's welcome, and the bloody lump on my face is almost invisible now with the right makeup.

In addition, I have a new seronegative honey, all the love, happiness and money I need. A deeper sense of peace and contentment that I've ever known. And next year, I have as my goal to achieve full artistic recognition.

How does Aunt Kaposi do it? How does she return from the abyss of utter demolition to rise like a phoenix on these illustrious pages, offering gratuitously all her well-earned wisdom and experience?

The answer, my dear pariahs, is the same for each and every one of you. Stigma with style, child. There is no time to hate. Ritualize your perversions. You are not alone. Unless you're lucky.

I have discovered it is good for the immune system to master foreign languages. The Chinese call it *chi*. The Japanese call it *ki*. Aunt Kaposi calls the life force "Wheeeeeeeee!"

Stay alive, my dear pariahs, Aunt Kaposi is coming to your neighborhood soon, bearing her hula hoop and legal drugs and possibly unsightly skin eruptions. Don't ask what your cure can do for you, ask what you can do for our cure. There's nothing wrong with our bodies and characters that a little death can't improve. Surrender to the good fight.

Love forever (or next month, whichever way you look at it.) —K.S.

Afad is ten minutes, a trend is six months, but a clone is forever. Clones have been with us since Stonewall, the dawn of Modern Gay Time. Throughout the '70s we saw the rise of the circuit queen (henceforth referred to as Clone Classic) with his mirrored sunglasses, tight jeans, gym body, and severe haircut. The Clone Classic was found in gyms, discos, and on Fire Island. One of the three memorable *Christopher Street* cartoons captured this phenomenon with a drawing of six clones captioned "Why gay men are seldom identified in police lineups." The late '80s gave us the New Clone, with multiple earrings, backwards baseball cap, gym body, and severe haircut. The New Clone could be found at the gym, at ACT UP meetings, at Queer Nation demonstrations, and on Fire Island. In the postmodern '90s at least 50% of the gay men in New York City are seropositive. Inevitably, health status has mutated into a fashion statement. Witness the parallels...

by David Feinberg

The New Clone

***Last vacation:
two weeks at Provincetown***

***Antioxidant:
Clinique skin cream***

***Spends spare time at
demonstrations***

***Favorite cocktail:
Cape Cod***

Easily bored

***Changing the sheets at
4 am after: hot sex***

***Fashion choice:
Galanos gowns***

***Least favorite homo in
history: Roy Cohn***

***Bald as a
fashion statement***

***Bitter because youth
passed by***

***Ex doesn't call because of
bad attitude.***

The AIDS Clone

***Last vacation:
two weeks at Lennox Hill***

***Antifungals:
Lotrisone, Clotrimazole***

***Spends spare time at
medical forums***

***Favorite Cocktail: AZT
and ddC***

Tires easily

***Changing the sheets at
4 am after: night sweats***

***Fashion necessity:
hospital gowns***


***Least favorite homo in
history: Roy Cohn***

***Bald from
radiation therapy***

***Bitter because he will
bypass age***

***Ex doesn't call because
he's dead***

A man's guide to the second sexual revolution.



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GET FAT, don't die!

Come All Ye to Vega!



***Can Gentle
Vegetarian Pariahs
Reconcile Their
Grazing Habits With
Their Nutritional Needs?***

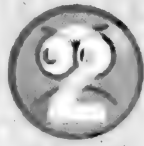
Dear Biffy Mae:
You carnivorous pig! All of your dietary strategies depend on the slaughter of innocent livestock. How can an enlightened individual such as yourself support this kind of carnage?

—Elsie Borden

Thank you for your letter of concern, Elsie, but let's get one thing clear right away: that's "carnivorous *sow*", dear. Our recipes here at DPN emphasize meat dishes because, gram for gram, there's more protein and calories in meat than in vegetables*. On the other hand, meat is often expensive, spoils easily, and sometimes just seems unappetizing. After all, even Biffy Mae doesn't eat meat at every meal. What's a gentle herbivore or an ecologically conscious pariah to do? The first thing is to take a look at the protein content of your meat-free diet. (If you already are a vegetarian, you already know a lot of what I'm about to tell you. Bear with me, it gets interesting.)

Get Fat, don't die! emphasizes high calorie, high protein dishes for two main reasons.

The Great DPN Taste Challenge, Revisited



Way back in DPN #5, we taste tested seven leading liquid nutritional supplements: Carnation Instant Breakfast, Enrich, Ensure, Ensure Plus, Meritene, Nutrament, and Sustacal. We also tasted samples of freshly extracted bitter melon juice as a way of calibrating our taste buds to the low end (like zero) of gustatory delight. Needless to say, the results were underwhelming, with our panel of judges awarding the seven contestants scores that ranged from 1.6 to 2.9. By comparing those numbers to the ones shown on the left, you can see how we felt about these samples.

But wait! The fun isn't over yet, because Cynthia Underhill of American Preferred Prescriptions sent us a sample of their nutritional supplement, ReGain. In their words, "...Regain is a protein, energy, and nutrient rich mix for weight gain, which has a rich, smooth and non-chalky flavor and consistency..." In addition, Regain contains enzymes which aid in absorption of the nutrients. We like free things around here, so how could we say no? Our averaged results were as follows: Taste - 1.5. Smell - 1.25, Color - 2.0, and Texture - 2.25.

We didn't retest last year's nutritional supplements, so the ReGain results exist in a vacuum. If you'd like to try ReGain out for yourself, write American Preferred Prescriptions at P.O. Box 9019, Farmingdale, NY 11735-9019. Phone: (516) 845-5300. Fax: (516) 845-5310.

—B.T.

things and dairy products, on the other hand, may be deficient in one or more amino acid. Our grazing brethren must take special care to pick the right combination of foods whose proteins complement one another. One way is to remember which food lacks what protein, or look them up in a dietary table. An easy shortcut to this is to remember three basic rules: combine grains with legumes (or nuts), grain with dairy products, or dairy products with legumes (or nuts).

PHILOSOPHY Ate you a grazer for esthetic or philosophical reasons? Some people just find the thought of eating meat to be repulsive, but still

own leather shoes. (If you can't sympathize with the "repulsive" part, try eating a sausage and pepperoni pizza while on Ecstasy, and you'll understand.) Others are concerned with the taking of *any* animal life. These individuals are at a severe disadvantage because animal products are pervasive in our culture, from food additives and toiletries to the grease used to lubricate machinery, including those that make food cans.

With the last paragraph in mind, are you or do you want to be an ovo-lacto vegetarian, or a vegan? As the term suggests, ovo-lacto boys and girls enjoy eggs and dairy products, but not necessarily from genetically engineered cows that would explode

The first is to help cushion the effects of sudden weight loss. The idea is that if you're fattened up a little bit, you're less likely to lose something important if you should meet MAC*, dysentery, giardia, or Lord knows what else. The second reason is a little more immediate. Many pariahs are less tempted by food because of nausea, taste perversions, or fatigue. In this case, every morsel of food should be packed with as much nutrition as possible. On top of all that, the serum cholesterol of HIVers tends to be significantly lower than our seronegative comrades, so there's little worry about arteriosclerosis twenty years down the road. (Twenty years? We should be so lucky.) With all of this in mind, let's take our first timid steps into an amazing dietary world.

PROTEIN Most dietary strategies are concerned with receiving enough useful protein. We don't just need protein, to a great degree we *are* protein, from the hair on our heads, through the muscles in our bodies, to the toenails on our feet. Proteins also control an immense variety of chemical and electrochemical reactions that make eating, drinking, breathing, screwing, and thinking possible. Human proteins are assembled from 20 different amino acids, which we get by digesting something else's proteins. These are broken down into their constituent amino acids and then reassembled to suit our needs. All 20 amino acids are essential; a deficiency in just one can cause serious problems.

Different foods contain varying amounts of amino acids. Animal parts have all of the amino acids necessary for strapping young lads (and wenches) such as ourselves. Planty

*That's *Mycobacterium avium* complex, formerly *Mycobacterium avio-intracellulare*.

GET FAT, don't die!

Biffy Mae's Truly Tasty Spanakopita

*1/3 pound mild feta cheese
1 medium container cottage cheese
3 eggs
nutmeg
freshly ground pepper
3-4 shallots
3 tablespoons mild olive oil
1 pound fresh spinach, shredded (or 10
ounces frozen spinach that has been
thawed and drained)
1/4 pound roasted unsalted pistachios,
chopped
1 package filo (φίλλω) dough, thawed*

Thaw the filo dough according to the package's instructions—this may take up to 24 hours. Combine the eggs and cottage cheese in a bowl. Crumble the feta and mix it in, along with several shakes of nutmeg and a few grinds of pepper. Set aside. Heat the olive oil and saute the shallots until they are translucent. Add the fresh spinach and stir until the leaves are thoroughly wilted. (If you're using thawed packaged spinach, cut the heat under the shallots and stir it in.) Fold the sauted shallots and spinach to the cheese mixture. Now for the fun part: handling the somewhat temperamental filo leaves. Grease a 9 x 9 x 3 glass or ceramic baking pan. Lay down several layers of filo dough, and brush these with olive oil. Spread a layer of spinach over this, and top with another layer of filo. Brush this layer with a little more olive oil, and sprinkle the chopped pistachios on top. Repeat this whole process, starting with another layer of filo, until you have used up your ingredients; about three complete layers. Finish the top with one last layer of filo, brush with yet more olive oil, and sprinkle with a little nutmeg. Bake this monstrosity at 350°F for 45 minutes, or until the top is a golden brown. Serve with fresh fruit.

if not milked three times a day. Meatless recipes abound for these individuals, never farther away than the nearest recipe book, especially the pasta section.

Vegans, on the other hand, have the more daunting challenge: to avoid the same insipid limp stir-fry meal every night. Biffy Mae knows some vegans who like that sort of thing. They insist that if it tastes good, then it really can't be wholesome. Poop on them. Let's take a more reasonable approach.

TOFU One classic and always popular solution is tofu, less glamorously known as bean curd. Tofu is made from soybeans in a process similar in concept to the way cheese is made from milk. Unlike cheese, tofu does not require rennet, which is an enzyme obtained from the lining of cows' stomachs. Tofu usually has a bland taste but readily absorbs the flavor of whatever it's cooked in. If you can find it fresh (that is, going to the *Tofuwerk* and having the *Tofufrau* lop off a steaming chunk of it into your outstretched baggy), it has a mild nutty flavor that is well worth the extra trouble. Tofu comes in different densities, from soft to extra firm, and is also available in smoked or seasoned varieties. What do you do with this macropsychotic ambrosia? Cut it up and put it in the stir-fry that we cast aspersions on earlier (Biffy Mae suggests getting the extra firm kind which won't fall apart), drop it in soups, or put it in a pilaf, but never ever make a cheese-cake with it. Some things are sacred. Also worth checking out is tempeh, a cousin of tofu which is used in Rhietta Lou's Surprising Tempeh Adobo on page 38.

Soybeans also yield soy milk and

miso paste. Despite what some nutritionists may claim, soy milk does *not* "taste just like milk", but it isn't bad, and can be used for drinking and cooking. In fact, carnivorous pariahs who are having problems with lactose intolerance might want to give soy milk a try. Miso is a fermented paste of soybeans. It has a flavor hard to describe, but it goes with just about anything. Dissolved in water, it forms an excellent stock for drinking on a cold day or using in soups and stews. You can also brush vegetables with a little miso and bake them, as shown on page 4.

BEANS While soybeans are known mostly by their derived foodstuffs, plain old regular beans are also an economical protein source. One 65¢ bag of black beans can last you for a week. (Actually, there's a third class of herbivore that wasn't mentioned at the beginning of this article, the socio-economic vegetarian. Biffy Mae was one of these in his most impoverished college days.) The main drag about this seemingly perfect food is the amount of time needed to cook them properly. With the exception of lentils, dried beans must be soaked for several hours, preferable overnight, and then simmered for a couple of hours. You can cheat and buy precooked canned beans like Biffy Mae does, but you pay a little more.

Then there's the issue of flatulence. Bean farts arise from a naturally occurring sugar called raffinose. Raffinose molecules are too big for human sugar-digesting enzymes to get their teeth around. The bugs that live in your gut, however, can metabolize raffinose and the resulting intestinal gas is the product of their good fortune. For the HIVer with digestive problems, flatulence may not

only dismiss you from your friends' good graces, it can be painful. One way to reduce the chances of getting gas is to cook the beans with rice, though this method isn't very dependable. For those of us who insist on modern living through chemicals, there's a food additive called *Bean-O*, which is supposed to placate the raffinose demons. Be careful though, some people are allergic to it.

Garbanzo beans (also called chick peas or ceci beans, though not really a true bean at all) are the basis for a number of middle eastern dishes. Falafel is made from ground up dried garbanzos and spices, which is then made into dough and fried as a dumpling. Falafel is often served in a pita bread sandwich with crunchy vegetables and a tangy yogurt-based sauce, but it goes well with marinara sauce too. Humus is a paste made from mashed cooked garbanzos, used as a dip. Ground garbanzos blended with grains or beans form the basis for a wide range of "garden burger" mixes which can be done up real tasty.

Finally, for those calorie-packers among us, nothing beats nuts. Nutmeats and some seeds like sesame, sunflower, and pumpkin are high in protein and just swimming in oil. Lightly toasted almonds brighten up any stir-fry, while pine-nuts complement starchy vegetables like carrots, turnips, or sweet potatoes. Pistachios and cashews go well with greens, and peanuts go with practically anything. Check out the peanut sauce in Biffy Mae's New World Tofu in Peanut Sauce on page 5. Even the mundane peanut butter and jelly sandwich can become a well-balanced snack if made with wheat bread. Remember: nuts, like beans, provide the most nutrition when eaten with grain products.

GRAINS Biffy Mae's friends who dutifully eat their underseasoned vegetable medleys do so with brown rice. Brown rice is nutritious. Brown rice is wholesome. Brown rice tastes like cardboard. (The same goes for whole wheat pasta, *yuck*.) Okay, maybe you're into that sort of thing, but don't feel like you have to limit yourself. Try the aromatic basmati or earthy wild rice, available inexpensively in bulk at many supermarkets. Check out couscous, a kind of pasta that makes a nifty hot cereal for breakfast. Cornbread or whole grain muffins are a nice alternative when you get tired of steamed rice. Plain ol' bread is one of the safest things for a pariah to eat. Bland and inoffensive, yet warmly comforting, bread is not merely a vehicle for sandwich items, it's a worthy food by itself. In fact, if you're in the process of tying up your assets into durable goods before declaring bankruptcy or going on social security, get a bread machine. A piping hot loaf programmed to be ready in the morning is one of life's simplest pleasures. (Biffy Mae recommends the Zojirushi brand Home Bakery.)

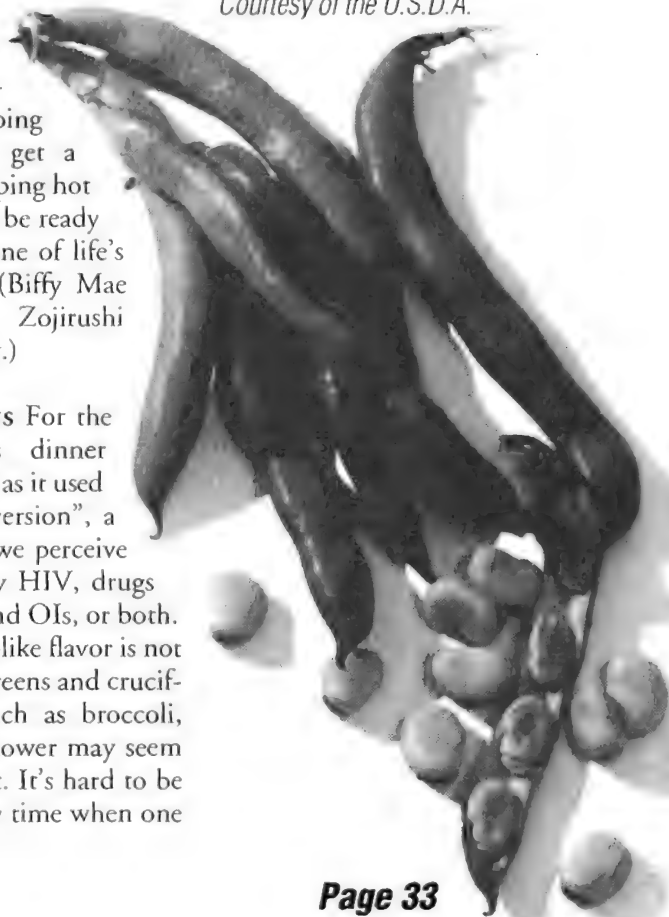
TASTE PERVERSIONS For the HIVer, sometimes dinner doesn't taste as good as it used to. This "taste perversion", a change in the way we perceive flavors, is caused by HIV, drugs used to treat HIV and OIs, or both. A metallic or iodine-like flavor is not uncommon*, and greens and cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower may seem especially malignant. It's hard to be enthusiastic at chow time when one

FLATULENCE

Here's a list of the ten most commonly eaten beans in the United States and their relative flatulence. They're ranked from soybeans (the most flatulent) to blackeye peas (the least flatulent). Sorry we can't provide hard figures, like milliliters of methane per gram of bean. Flatulence levels will also vary with individual diners.

1. Soybeans
2. Pink beans
3. Black beans
4. Pinto beans
5. California small white beans
6. Great northern beans
7. Lima beans (baby)
8. Garbanzos
9. Lima beans (large)
10. Blackeye peas.

Courtesy of the U.S.D.A.



**Biffy Mae likens his own to the flavor of an eternal bloody nose.*

GET FAT, don't die!

Biffy Mae's Emergency Minestrone

1 medium onion, chopped
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
3-4 Tablespoons olive oil
oregano, sage, and thyme
1 large can V-8 juice
1 bag of mixed frozen vegetables
macaroni



Eek! The executor of your boyfriend's estate is coming over and you haven't a thing for dinner! In a soup pot quickly saute some onions and garlic in olive oil. When the onions are translucent, add your favorite Italian seasonings, and saute for another minute or so. Add the V-8 juice and the frozen veggies. Bring to a boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Add some dry macaroni and cook for 10-12 minutes more. Serve with roasted bread and butter.

Biffy Mae's Little Bean Salad

1/4 pound yellow wax beans
1/4 pound green beans
1/2 pond fava bean pods
1 red bell pepper, cored and chopped
raspberry vinegar
bottled Italian salad dressing
paprika, salt, ground pepper

Snap the wax and green beans into 2-inch pieces. Open up the fava pods and take out the beans. Discard the pods. Mix all of the beans together, and nuke then on HIGH for 5 to 10 minutes, or until they are just steamed throughout. Remove from the microwave and blanch in cold water. Drain the beans, pop the favas out of their tough skin, and toss them into a salad bowl along with the bell peppers. Sprinkle with the raspberry vinegar and salad dressing. Shake on the spices to taste, and toss lightly. Chill before serving. A great lunch item for warm weather.

dreads each bite, and vegetarians usually have to eat more fodder than the rest of us to get the same amount of nutrition. Sweet flavors are often the least affected by a taste perversion, and you can turn this to your advantage. Add fresh or dried fruit to your main dishes. You'd be surprised what dried apricots, cranberries, or raisins can do for a stir-fry, casserole, or pilaf. A tablespoon of molasses or a small piece of chocolate can balance a tomato sauce. Thinly sliced fresh apples add zest to potato dishes like home fries or au gratin. (Sorry, there is nothing that can salvage the moldy flavor and fetid aroma of Brussels sprouts. By the way, 95% of our nation's Brussels sprouts are grown not far from where Biffy Mae lives, along a fifty mile long section of coast between San Francisco and Santa Cruz. Just think, one small thermonuclear device to wipe out practically the entire American supply!)

THE OFFICIAL TRUTH

Finally, a note on variety. All the suggestions mentioned above refer to the staples of your diet, so after ingesting your vegetarian slurry, reward yourself with something you like, especially dessert. Break up the heaviness of your main dishes with light and crunchy things, so you don't feel like you're carrying a gur full of mud from the Mississippi delta.

Don't feel guilty about eating foods that orthodox vegetarian guidelines might frown at. If you're getting all of your nutrients and staying fat, that's what's important. A quick look at some of the recipes in this issue will give you an idea of what's possible without having to kill and eat things with faces, our cousins and fellow travelers on this lifeboat Earth. Remember though, Biffy Mae is your chef, not your doctor, so be sure to consult your physician before making any radical changes to your diet. He or she may have comments or suggestions for the particulars of your medical situation. (And try Luke-O

Plakia's Faceless Stroganoff first, it's to die for.)
Bon appetit! —B.L.

Travelers' advisory:

The bug season is in full swing, and have you noticed that mosquito bites pull up much more than they used to? How about flea bites that persist for months? It has something to do with impaired immune response and it's not pleasant. Save yourself some trouble and buy a b-i-i-i-i-g can of Deep Woods Off, and douse yourself with it, your clothes, and open doorways. Off smells foul and it's fairly sticky, but it makes summer evenings much more enjoyable.



BIG RED RIBBONS

When asked by *The Advocate* her opinion on the boycott of Colorado, pop princess Debbie Gibson said, "I think it's stupid... I went and did a radio promotion recently, and I whipped out my jacket with the big red ribbon on the back and wore it. For me, that says a lot more than not going at all."

Yeah, Debbie. I'm sure the radio listeners of Colorado *heard* that big red ribbon blaring over the airwaves. And I was just wondering: what the hell does your red ribbon have to do with the Colorado amendment?

Ah... the red ribbon. Pinned to lapels initially to show solidarity with the struggle against AIDS, now a gargantuan fashion trend the likes of which haven't been seen since 1983, when Madonna introduced those armloads of black gummy bracelets.

Maybe in 1987 you bought that Tracy Chapman album, you bought every Bob Dylan album released on compact disc, and so you called yourself politically aware. You called yourself an activist. Now you got that red ribbon and you don't need to actually DO anything cos you've already proven how goddamn much you care. Nobody's gonna say you're not politically correct, nobody—and certainly not yourself—is gonna call you a narcissistic asshole.

If you can tell me why you're wearing that ribbon (besides "I'm concerned about AIDS") then okay. I'm with you. If not,

GET YOUR FUCKING
RED RIBBON OUT
OF MY FACE.

I'm sick of seeing a dewy-eyed Elizabeth Taylor in *People* magazine, a close-up of her I'm-so-concerned-about-this-that-my-face-is-falling-off look, while in the blurred background you can make out the bedridden AIDS patient she's visiting. And in the article, they're asking Elizabeth Taylor about the traumas of living with AIDS. Nevermind that there's a person dealing with it right behind her, no! Why ask a person what's going on in her or his head when Elizabeth Fucking Taylor is willing to tell ya for them?

I'm sick of red-ribboned celebrities saying, "Oh! Oh! Those poor people with AIDS. Those poor things!" If I'm gonna die, I don't intend to die pitied. I'll gather up my last bits of strength to pull myself up from that hospital bed, tear the fucking ribbon from your body, and tear up as much of you as I can before relaxing into my last dying gasp.

But I admire the skill of these celebrities, who have figured out that if you want to make a career comeback, if you want that new ditty to hit number one, just hold an AIDS benefit and you're all set. Granted, the fight needs the money. I just hope these so-called talents have no illusion that their worth extends beyond that.

So it's 1993; and you've replaced that Tracy Chapman album with "Red Hot & Blue", "Red Hot & Dance", "Red Hot & Whatever the Fuck Else".

So have I. But listening to the latest benefit is not going to stop a plague. It's not going to stop the preachers, the stigma of being HIV positive, it's not gonna stop AIDS discrimination, and it's not going to get the voices that need to be heard, heard.

I remember in one episode of "The Smurfs," Gargamel screamed at his cat Azrael, "Don't just *do* something, *stand* there!" Or just whip out that big red ribbon.



—Collin Chace



MEIN KOCK



Mein Kock ©1991 von Sierra Pacific
öffnete anderthalb aus fünf Augen.

Porn Potato has always grown to a different diurnal rhythm than his fellow spuds in the field. In early childhood, these clashes with the prevailing ideologies were dismissed as youthful fancy. Later on, the snakepits that Porn Potato excavated were much deeper and struck more raw nerves.

When yours truly read *Brave New World* in high-school, he found himself defending Aldous Huxley's utopia. How could I fathom such a stifling regime, my English teacher demanded. Perhaps I was a commie, accused my classmates. I tried to explain that the society depicted in *BNW* was truly benevolent, because it offered a comfortable place for everyone. Sure, the social structure consisted of five rigidly ordered castes, and everyone who wished to live indoors was expected to sacrifice their individuality for the smooth operation of the social machinery. But, Porn Potato argued, the planners of this same society realized that there would be people who couldn't fit in. They were given reign over the world's "free islands", located in the hospitable South Pacific, where

they could swim, fish, and count the stars. What could be better than dancing under the coconut palms and discussing philosophy, while the rest of society toils to maintain the infrastructure? Honestly, the libertarians have been doing that sort of thing for years.

With this willingness to kick sacred cows, Porn Potato had hoped to lead you into the alternate reality of *Mein Kock*. With a title like that, the viewer would rightly expect to be seduced by erotic images of fraternal community, the willingness to use and be abused by power, to be carried away by the spell of *der Führer* and national socialism; and perhaps realize some unflattering things about themselves and human nature. Sadly, the best thing about *Mein Kock* was the box it came shrink-wrapped in.

As the tale begins, we find ourselves in the not-too-distant future of a world gone to seed. The national economy has stalled, shopping malls lay in ruins, and Pizza Huts stand gutted. None of this is obvious in the video, which opens with a young waif wandering through the California redwoods; one has to read the packaging to capture all of these subtle nuances. The waif is very unhappy...living in the shadow of the apocalypse is one thing, but dammit, there aren't any batteries left in the world to power his condominium-sized ghetto blaster. (We're

not even sure what he's doing out in the woods. He has no camping gear to speak of, unless his boom box unfolds into a tent with room for a sleeping bag.) While pouting on a stump, he spies five goosestepping youths marching up along the trail.

These boys belong to a movement called *The Solution*. They dress in nifty uniforms, and swear their allegiance to a banner that's supposed to look Nazi-esque, but more closely resembles the national flag of Thailand. There's this big rally coming up, and the local group leader, Colonel Crotch, is busy giving orders. "You, patrol the perimeter. You, go back to the fort, and you..." he turns to buxom Sergeant Schwanzstecker, "...come back to the tent with me."

Col. Crotch is a shapely but slightly dried-out looking twinkie. Sgt. Schwanzstecker is comely but looks too much like a grownup to be hanging out with the rest of *The Solution's* juveniles. Despite these slight thematic imperfections, they waste no time getting down to business, rolling around on the sleeping bags while exchanging lots of passionate smooches. (Nice to know that even neo-Fascists have a tender side.) They teasingly fondle each other through their garments, gradually shedding one piece at a time, until their left in nothing but their socks and stormboots. What a feast for the eyes!

Col. Crotch, despite the complexion of having had barnacles sandblasted from his cheekbones, is lean and shapely in all of the right places, with a magnificent set of buns. They're ample and round, but not too big, the color of Stay-Puff marshmallows. They're firm, but not so much so that they don't yield tantalizingly under Sgt. Schwanzstecker's kneading grip. Schwanzstecker himself is golden and godlike in his leanness, and ogles Crotch's body with a feral intensity.

Col. Crotch starts out giving the orders, but eventually control is relinquished to Schwanzstecker. First, Crotch orders Schwanzstecker to suck his dick. Then he kneels over Schwanzstecker and fucks his face, his big low hangers banging against the other's chin. There's a pleasant contrast between Crotch's ivory buttocks and the taut stomach and heaving chest of Schwanzstecker, with the grinding of lips and genitalia in between. Porn Potato likes that.

Reciprocity is the order of the day, and the two eventually end up in a fairly well proportioned sixty-nine. Normally Porn Potato fast-forwards through this act, so PC in concept but rarely photogenic. These lads are the exception though, their maniacal intensity saving the day. Then, with Col. Crotch on his back, Sgt. Schwanzstecker sticks one finger in the Colonel's butthole, then two, then three. A nice slow priming of the equipment before Schwanzstecker inserts in his ample tool and begins pumping away. *Das gefällt der Pornkartoffel sehr.* After a while, Schwanzstecker grabs Crotch's ankles and thoroughly plows the verdant fields of his Fatherland. Unfortunately, the videography suffers in the cramped quarters of the tent, so much of the

best action is obscured by a wayward thigh or arm. Porn Potato doesn't like that, and shame on cameraman Bill Hunter (hi, Billy) for allowing this to happen.

The Sergeant flips the Colonel over and does him doggy style. The view is much better here, the light from outside streaming through the nylon tent and reflecting off of Schwanzstecker's pumping cock and right abs. The boys end the

vignette with Crotch doing the flying helicopter squat onto Schwanzstecker's dick. This again Porn Potato usually fast-forwards through, but these two command the attention of the viewer. Crotch has the stamina to hold his buttocks in mid-air over Schwanzstecker's loins, and you can see the contact and rebound of the Sergeant's pubic bone against the Colonel's buns, while they remain connected by Schwanzstecker's erect dick. Col. Crotch shoots his wad on Sgt. Schwanzstecker's chest, and then Schwanzstecker returns the favor by spooging all over Crotch's face. After some post-coital nuzzling, Col. Crotch whispers tenderly in Sgt. Schwanzstecker's ear, "You and I can change the world."

Pornkartoffel continues on the next page



GET FAT, don't die!

Rhietta Lou's Surprising Tempeh Adobo

3-4 tablespoons peanut oil
1 lb. tempeh, cut into chunks
¾ pineapple vinegar, though rice vinegar makes an good second choice, white vinegar a close third.
¾ cup soy sauce
1 cup sliced onions
1 cup button mushrooms
1 large piece of ginger root, cut into chunks
2 cloves of garlic, minced
black pepper to taste
¾ coconut milk (canned)
steamed rice
chutney, raisins, mint, or your favorite sweet and spicy condiments

Heat the oil in a wok or large pan. Saute the onions and mushrooms until the onions just begin to turn translucent. Add everything but the coconut milk, and bring to a vigorous bubble. Lower the heat, and simmer the adobo until the sauce has reduced in volume a little and the onions are nice and slimy. Fish out and discard the pieces of ginger root, then add the coconut. Stir the contents to mix them thoroughly, and allow to bubble a little more. Serve with steamed rice and your favorite condiments.

Biffy Mae's Killer Cobbler

1 cup Bisquick
1 cup milk
1 cup sugar
½ stick butter
1 bag frozen blackberries (≈4 cups)

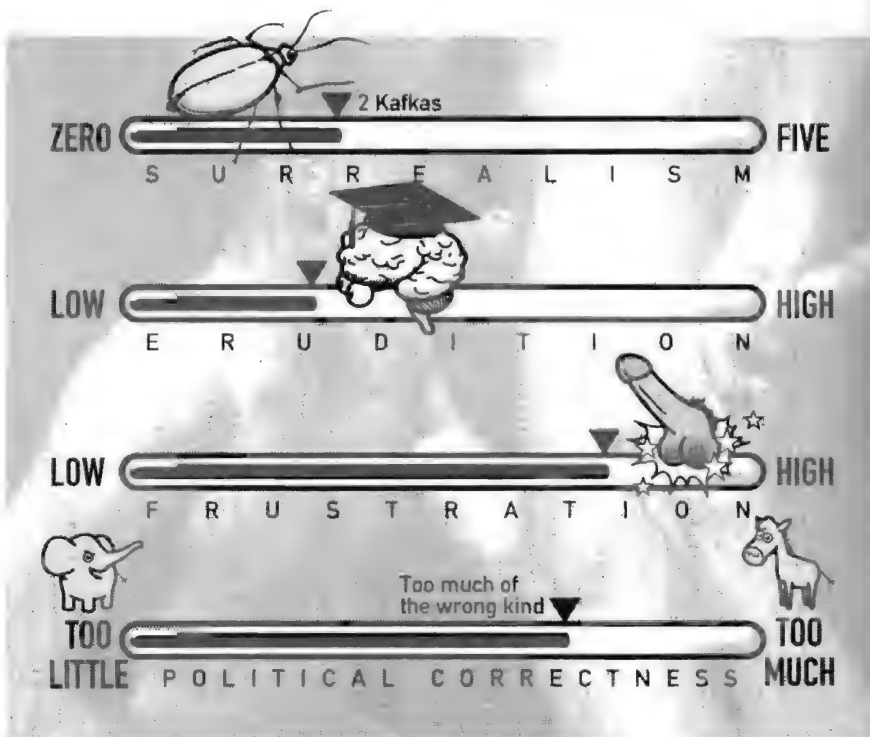
Back by popular demand. Mix the first three ingredients together. Melt the butter and pour into a 9 × 9 baking pan. Pour the batter over the butter. Drop the fruit on top and bake at 350° F for about an hour, or until the cobbler is golden brown and bubbly.

At this point, the viewer is encouraged to hit the rewind and put in a new tape, like Porn Potato should have done. What follows is the indoctrination of the young waif we saw in the beginning of the video by other members of *The Solution*. Unfortunately, they all look awkward and underwhelmed, perhaps wanting to be somewhere else or worrying that they may have left the oven on before leaving the concentration camp. Later on, what could have been a really hot scene with der Kommissar taking liberties with two of the young gooses-teppers was totally lost to poor planning, poor chemistry, and poor dialogue. Der Kommissar is dark, angular, and handsome, but ends up lamely wanking himself while the other two boyscouts try vainly to copulate. Eventually, the waif becomes annoyed with all of this banality, rips off his velcro armband (velcro? Hitler must be rolling in his grave!), and goes back to moping on his stump in the redwoods, leaving everyone with lots

of unanswered questions.

Questions like, what is the official status of buttfucking in the youth corps? Are these young lads screwing because of *The Solution* or in spite of it? Or, as Porn Potato hopes, are they militant homosexuals hellbent on recruiting the nation's young people, as the rabid fundamentalists have always accused? Porn Potato could support an agenda where brotherhood and frequent practice of sodomy replace loitering in the ruined shopping malls and ravaged arcades of the not-too-distant future.

On a scale of one to five eyes, *Mein Kock* barely opened one and a half. Supplementary scores: Surrealism—two Kafkas; erudition—low; frustration—high; and political correctness—too much of the wrong kind. The first vignette is worth checking out, but don't rely on this video as the sole entertainment for your next orgy. As for Porn Potato, he's ready to sit down an jerk off to a nice long viewing of *Saló*. —P.P.



Politics as Usual

I.

If elected I promise to put a dick in every ass, a tongue in every cunt. Your life will have meaning again. No more Saturday nights alone unless you want to be. You can have what's behind doors number one, two, and three and you don't have to give up anything. Plus a year's supply of Turtle Wax and Queer Public Space—The San Francisco Treat. Together we will tie a yellow ribbon around Uncle Sam's neck. Together we will crucify Vanna White.

II.

Read my lips
Pop my zits
No more flirting
No more fucking
I'm a ditz
Kiss my grits
No more breathing
No more cumming

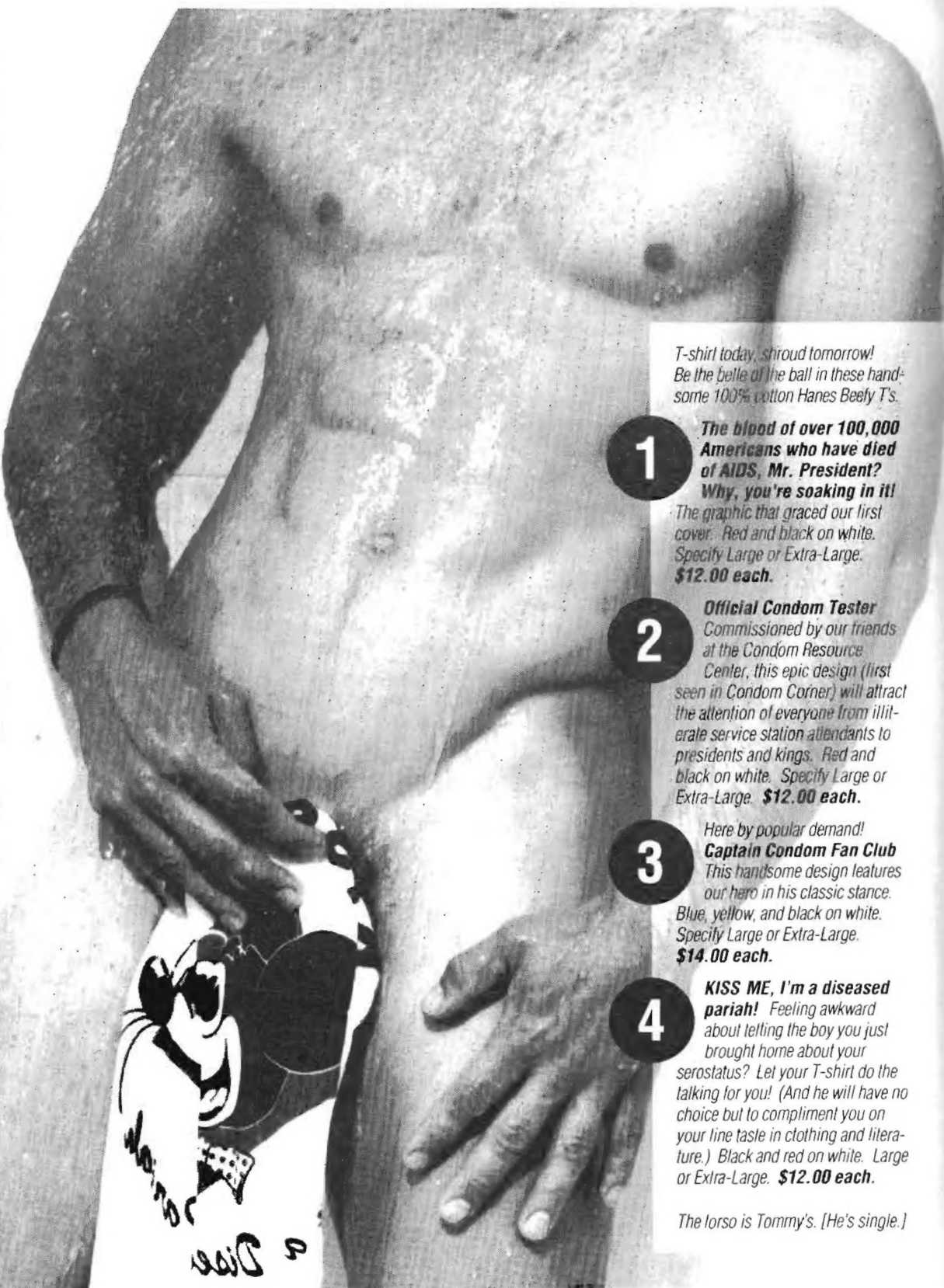
III.

Four score and seven years ago AIDS was spread by washing people's dirty mouths out with soap. Daisy Duke was the first to get it. She was called a man with AIDS. AIDS did very well in the ratings. It was shown at 10 Eastern and Pacific times and 9 Central. AIDS won the Super Bowl and the Presidential election. AIDS made people think they were dead. Sometimes they were right. Other times they were crazy wrong. Wonder Woman rode a horse and challenged AIDS to a shootout but that only improved the ratings. Nielsen families loved spunky full-breasted women with horses and guns who were only actresses. AIDS was a hit. It went up one and seven-eighths points in heavy trading. No one knew what they would ever do without it. People would call AIDS in from the cold, take off its mittens and socks, feed it Campbell's tomato soup, then pinch its cheeks and say I don't know what I would ever do without you. AIDS slept with the producer, got a recording contract and sold millions of copies. AIDS bought several television sets and cried at weddings. For a while, AIDS worked nine to five then tuned out, turned off and dropped out. AIDS was indicted on eighteen counts of indecent exposure and business as usual. AIDS got drunk and threw up. AIDS told one person then they told one person and so on and so on. AIDS was only a test. If it had been a real emergency you would have been told. This has been a message from the Emergency Bullshit System. Have a donut. AIDS was not a disease but it played one on TV. Four out of five Americans recommended AIDS to their patients who drank dick juice or got high. One out of five Americans kept AIDS for themselves. When AIDS talked people didn't listen. Now it's time to say goodbye to all our family. A-C-Q. Q because you're queer. U-I-R-E-D. D because you use your dick. IMMUNE DEFICIENCY. See you real soon. SYNDROME. Why? Becasue we love you.

IV.

Welcome to the first of our fireside chats. Would you prefer white wine or rosé? Not to worry, the bear rug is hypoallergenic. I hope you know you're a lovely person and your thermal underwear is to die for. Please be naked now and let the firelight dance on your raw flesh.

DISEASED PARIAH



T-shirt today, shroud tomorrow!
Be the belle of the ball in these handsome 100% cotton Hanes Beefy T's.

1

The blood of over 100,000 Americans who have died of AIDS, Mr. President?

Why, you're soaking in it!

The graphic that graced our first cover. Red and black on white. Specify Large or Extra-Large. **\$12.00 each.**

2

Official Condom Tester

Commissioned by our friends at the Condom Resource Center, this epic design (first seen in Condom Corner) will attract the attention of everyone from illiterate service station attendants to presidents and kings. Red and black on white. Specify Large or Extra-Large. **\$12.00 each.**

3

Here by popular demand!

Captain Condom Fan Club

This handsome design features our hero in his classic stance. Blue, yellow, and black on white. Specify Large or Extra-Large. **\$14.00 each.**

4

KISS ME, I'm a diseased pariah!

Feeling awkward about telling the boy you just brought home about your serostatus? Let your T-shirt do the talking for you! (And he will have no choice but to compliment you on your line taste in clothing and literature.) Black and red on white. Large or Extra-Large. **\$12.00 each.**

The torso is Tommy's. [He's single.]

6

Thought-provoking **DPN postcards!** Red and black on matte finish cardstock. Ask for "You're Soaking in It!" or "Roy & Kimberly". Sorry, "Piss Jesse" no longer available. **50¢ each.**



5



Official DPN buttons, featuring the lovable Oncomouse. Black, red, and white. Also available: "Porn Potato Likes That," "Porn Potato Doesn't Like That," and "GET FAT, don't die!" in black and white. 2-1/4 inches in diameter. **\$1.00 each.**

7

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156



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